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ABSTRACT

This report describes major activities and accomplishments of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research & Training Center on Enhancing Employability of Individuals with Disabilities from May 15, 1996 through May 14, 1997. The Center has a 5-year contract in the priority area of enhancing employability of individuals with severe disabilities. The mission, goals, and objectives are outlined and related to the six priority areas of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). Programmatic strategies for achieving the objectives are discussed and outcome goals are identified in the four areas of: (1) research; (2) dissemination; (3) training, education, and technical assistance; and (4) service and outreach. The project's 21 research projects are grouped by NIDRR priority areas with each objective listed and a summary included of the current status of specific projects addressing each objective. Brief indivdiual research project progress reports are included. Dissemination activities of the project are reviewed with lists of publications, presentations, and material development and distribution activities. Also described are project efforts in the areas of training, education, technical assistance, service, and outreach. Consumer/constituent feedback is summarized. Attached is a list of the faculty, staff, and members of the National Advisory Council. (DB)

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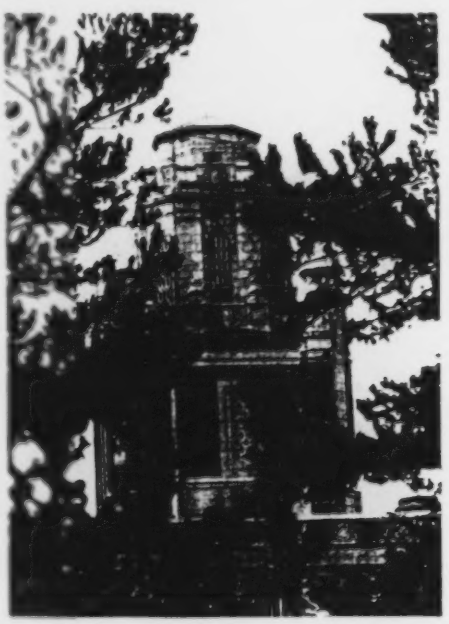
ED 409 685

Annual Report

NUMBER THIRTY-TWO

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER

ON ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



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Performance Reporting Period

May 15, 1996 - May 14, 1997

Current Budget Period

Aug. 5, 1996 - Aug. 4, 1997

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Project Summary

Introduction

The University of Arkansas received funding for a five-year cycle beginning August 5, 1993 to operate a Research and Training Center in the priority area, Enhancing Employability of Individuals with Severe Disabilities. This report provides information about the activities, accomplishments, and outcomes of the Center in meeting its objectives. Performance is reported for the period May 15, 1996 through May 14, 1997.

Center Mission, Objectives and Projected Outcomes

The mission of the Center is to maximize employment preparation and outcomes for people with disabilities. The objectives of the Center are to:

1) generate new knowledge, ideas, and information related to the employability development and employment of people with disabilities;

2) disseminate employment-related information to a wide audience; and

3) facilitate the utilization of employment related information in a variety of settings.

The projected outcomes of achieving these objectives are: 1) an increased access to and use of employment-related information and products, 2) an improved capacity of the disability service delivery system to more effectively and efficiently provide employment-related services, and 3) an improved employment preparation and career status for people with disabilities.

Programmatic Strategies for Achieving Objectives and Goals

The Center operates four high quality comprehensive and interrelated programs to assist in achieving its objectives, mission and projected outcomes. They are:

1) A research program designed to achieve objective 1 and generate new employment-related knowledge and information.

2) A dissemination program designed to achieve objective 2 and transfer new employment-related knowledge and information to the widest possible audience utilizing a variety of strategies.

3) A training, education, and technical assistance program designed to achieve objectives 2 and 3 and to impact the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the Center's target audiences through a planned and systematic sequence of instruction and problem-solving activities.

4) A service and outreach program designed to achieve objective 3 and to strengthen ties and expand cooperative and collaborative activities with constituency groups.

Priority Focus Areas

Research, dissemination, training, education, and technical assistance activities are carried out focusing on the following priority areas consistent with the six absolute priorities established by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and published in the Request for Proposals to which the Center responded and was funded. They are:

1) Service Delivery Collaboration

2) Career Exploration and Preparation for Students With Disabilities

3) Community-based Employment Strategies

4) Empowerment Skills, Knowledge, and Services

5) Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process

6) Employability Information Dissemination and Utilization

The following project status section provides information about the activities and results of the programmatic strategies to achieve the Center's objectives and documents the progress, accomplishments, and outcomes of the Center.

Project Status

Introduction

This part of the performance report provides information about the progress of the Center in accomplishing its objectives. First a summary of significant accomplishments is provided for each objective. Then, detailed progress reports are provided for each programmatic strategy (①Research, ②Dissemination, ③ Training, Education, and Technical Assistance, and ④Service and Outreach). Finally, this part ends with a review of supplemental projects and a summarization of feedback obtained from Center constituents as to their perception of the products produced by the Center and the effectiveness of the products in achieving projected outcomes.

Summary of Significant Accomplishments

The Center continues to be a national and international resource in the area of enhancing the employment preparation and facilitating employment outcomes for people with disabilities. This section summarizes some of the significant accomplishments that relate to each of the Center's objectives.

Objective One: Objective one relates to the generation of new knowledge, ideas and information about employability development and employment outcomes. Center faculty are conducting research in six priority areas which include twenty-one projects. All are in varying stages of generating employment ideas and information. The following presentation summarizes the progress. Details are provided in the section on research within the individual research project progress reports beginning on page 15.

Priority I, service delivery collaboration. Activities in this priority area have resulted in:

- a model for facilitating collaboration among community service providers, consumers with disabilities, and other community entities that impact employment.
- the model's implementation in a mid-sized community in Arkansas is providing information on the effectiveness of the model and resulting in refinements.
- information and ideas generated in this priority area will result in techniques and strategies that will be published in a resource document useable by communities across the country to enhance collaboration.

Priority II, career exploration and preparation for students with disabilities. Activities have resulted in the generation of knowledge, ideas, and information useful to a large audience interested in the school-to-work transition process. Examples of information generated during this reporting period include:

- new information related to the current limitations and shortcomings of planning and developing individualized transition plans for students with disabilities,
- information relative to techniques and strategies that improve the individualized transition planning process,
- a strategy for monitoring Individualized Education Plans to ensure that employment and career-related issues are addressed during the transition process,
- information identifying critical incidents that affect the planning, instructing and monitoring functions required to improve vocational outcomes of students with disabilities,
- new information about the transition referral process between schools and community programs,
- information identifying trends related to the referral process with recommendations and suggestions for improvement,
- information concerning the major issues in providing transition services by rehabilitation agencies.

Priority III, community-based employment strategies. Activities have resulted in the generation of knowledge, ideas, and information relative to effective models, procedures and techniques useful to individuals in a variety of community-based agencies and organizations. Some specific examples of information about community-based employment enhancement strategies developed in this priority area are:

- information about assessment and planning approaches that assist employees with multiple sclerosis to identity job accommodation and retention needs,
- ecological assessment procedures for use in job accommodation and retention counseling and service provision,
- a model for planning, developing, and implementing employment preparation programs in a variety of community settings,
- information relative to the impact of implementing the above model on selective employment related outcomes for people with disabilities in community rehabilitation programs and secondary schools,
- employment preparation information useful in training and educational programs to improve the delivery of employment preparation services to people with disabilities.

Priority IV, empowerment skills, knowledge, and services. Examples of new ideas knowledge, and information being generated in this area include:

- a multifaceted definition of empowerment and a model useful for conducting training and educational activities relative to empowerment,
- information useful for constructing measures of empowerment for use in research and service provision,
- information relative to the major components of cultural competence and their relationship to rehabilitation counselors,
- a theoretical perspective on empowerment that focuses on three forms of power that will be useful for developing empowerment employment programs.

Priority V, strategies for improving the vocational rehabilitation process. Activities have generated ideas and information for improving the vocational rehabilitation system, via information focusing on the eligibility process, service planning, and service provision. Examples include:

- information relative to rehabilitation counselors' eligibility decisions and the value of quantifying the diagnostic process,
- information and strategies that can facilitate streamlining the eligibility determination process when order-of -selection is a part of the process,
- information about critical behaviors for employment success and techniques and strategies that can be useful in training and educating both service providers and consumers with disabilities,
- information pertaining to the rehabilitation counseling implications of the philosophies and strategies used by a group of exemplary counselors,
- information identifying important counselor beliefs and behaviors that relate to successful employment outcomes,
- a strategy for identifying barriers and needed accommodations affecting the ability of people with disabilities to retain employment over time; in the form of a useful tool to be used by service providers and consumers with disabilities,
- a strategy for conducting job retention assessment and counseling for employees with chronic illness,
- information relative to effective placement techniques and strategies and how the information can be incorporated into a placement planning seminar,
- computer software that can be used by service providers to enhance the eligibility, service planning, and service provision phases of the rehabilitation process,
- information relative to the self-employment of people with disabilities.

Priority VI, employability information and utilization. Information relative to the employment of people with disabilities continues to be gathered, disseminated, and consumer reaction obtained.

Objective Two: Objective two is to disseminate employment-related information to a wide audience. The following summarizes the significant accomplishments during this reporting period. Details are provided in the section on "Dissemination" beginning on page 59.

- Multiple strategies have been employed to disseminate information to a wide audience including publications, presentations, and materials distribution.
- Twelve exhibits at national, regional, state, and local meetings and conferences introduced Center products to an estimated audience of 10,270.
- Faculty delivered 28 presentations at 23 national, regional, state, and local meetings.
- Thirty-five manuscripts were published in a variety of outlets.
- Materials Development and Dissemination Center distributed 10,075 products worldwide and an unknown number through secondary dissemination units across the country.

Objective 3: Objective 3 is to facilitate the utilization of employment-related information and products. Significant accomplishments during this reporting period are presented below with details provided in the sections beginning on page 69. Faculty have:

- carried-out a comprehensive program of training, education, and technical assistance activities,
- conducted 66 training sessions including 32 pre-service activities, 33 inservice programs and one public education program,
- delivered 845.75 hours of instruction,
- provided training and educational activities for 1049 trainees,
- provided technical assistance to numerous organizations, agencies, and individuals, utilizing a variety of methods,
- conducted service and outreach activities resulting in the collaboration of the RTC with constituent groups,
- received a positive response from Center's constituents as to the usefulness, helpfulness, and impact of Center's products.

Research

Introduction

The research program is designed to generate new knowledge, ideas, and information related to employability development and employment. Six comprehensive research programs with twenty-one interrelated research projects are being conducted by the RTC. The research programs parallel the six priority statements established by NIDRR and are discussed in the grant application on pages 15-21, with project descriptions on pages 54-160. The six research priorities, their objectives, and projects are as listed:

Research Project Listing

Research Priority I - Service Delivery Collaboration

Objectives

Develop and evaluate model programs involving collaborative efforts of multiple service delivery systems including private and state rehabilitation agencies, independent living programs, and community facilities to promote employment readiness, vocational skills, and positive work habits that will enhance the employability of individuals with disabilities.

Projects

RI-A A National Survey to Identify Model Programs of Collaboration Involving Multiple Service Delivery Systems, Consumers, and Other Community Entities

RI-B Development of a Community-Based Model Collaborative Association Involving Persons with Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers, and Selected Resource Persons

RI-C Evaluation of the Consequences of Community-Based Collaboration on Employment Services

Research Priority II - Career Exploration and Preparation for Students with Disabilities

Objectives

Identify, develop, and evaluate techniques to promote career awareness and career exploration in young persons with disabilities, using strategies that involve special education, secondary education, vocational education, transition programs, and youth manpower programs.

Projects

RII-A Inclusion of Career Awareness and Exploration Objectives in Educational Planning

RII-B Instruction of Students with Disabilities in Career Awareness and Exploration Using Strategies that Involve Special Education, Vocational Education, Transition Programs, and Youth Manpower Programs

RII-C Involvement of Special Education, Secondary Education, Vocational Education, Transition Programs, and Youth Manpower Programs in Coordinated Career Services to Students with Disabilities

RII-D Development of a Policy Options Database and a Study of IEPs in Demonstration and Nondemonstration Sites

Research Priority III - Community-Based Employment Strategies

Objectives

Identify, develop and evaluate the best practices for enhancing employability, involving special education, adult and vocational education, secondary education, transition programs, and other manpower training programs, and develop and test community-based employment planning and advancement strategies for all persons with disabilities, with emphasis placed on those individuals with various severe disabilities.

Projects

RIII-A Demonstrating the Effects of a Community-Based Employability Enhancement Clinic Serving Referrals from Secondary and Adult Education, Transition Programs, and Other Manpower Training Programs

RIII-B Characteristics of Persons with Severe Disabilities Who Excel in Independent Living and Career Development

RIII-C Utilizing a Community-Based Advocacy Group (the local Multiple Sclerosis Society) to Improve the Employment Retention and Advancement Capabilities of People with Severe Disabilities

Research Priority IV - Empowerment Skills, Knowledge, and Services

Objectives

Identify skills and knowledge required to empower consumers of employment-related services and develop and demonstrate model services emphasizing consumer choice and

self-advocacy in planning for and gaining access to education and training programs that can improve their employment skills.

Projects

RIV-A Measurement of Empowerment: Development of an Instrument to Assess Individual Status

RIV-B Personal Careers Planning: Enhancing Self-Direction of the Vocational Planning Process

RIV-C Empowering Individuals with Disabilities from Minority Backgrounds Through Training in Career Decision-Making

RIV-D Promoting Client Empowerment and Involvement During the Rehabilitation Intake and Program Development Process

Research Priority V - Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process

Objectives

Develop and evaluate the effectiveness of new and emerging technology for improving a) eligibility determinations, b) vocational assessment, c) job preparation, and d) job placement.

Projects

RV-A Analysis of a Statewide Database to Address Fundamental Issues in VR Eligibility Determination

RV-B Translating Vocational Assessment Data into Implications for Job Counseling and Placement Via Computer-Generated Reports

RV-C Demonstration of Technologies to Improve Job Preparation Skills of Rehabilitation Counselors

RV-D Demonstration of Technologies to Improve Job Placement Skills of Rehabilitation Counselors

RV-E Self-Employment for People with Disabilities

RV-F Technology Assistance Services: A Program Evaluation, Technical Assistance and Service Project

PROJECT STATUS

Research Priority VI - Employability Information Dissemination and Utilization

Objectives

Collect, organize, maintain, and disseminate information on issues related to employability of individuals with disabilities.

Projects

RVI-A Establishment and Operation of a Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center in Employability Enhancement for Persons with Disabilities

The following section provides information on the progress of each project during this reporting period.

Research Project Progress Reports

Priority Area I: Service Delivery Collaboration

I. Research Project R-IA

A. Title: A National Survey to Identify Model Programs of Collaboration Involving Multiple Service Delivery Systems, Consumers, and Other Community Entities

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1995

C. Project Status: Completed

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 60-63

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Bob Means, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

This project was initially designed to identify community-based programs addressing the preparation and employment of persons with disabilities that involve multiple service delivery systems in ongoing collaborative efforts that were judged to be "model" programs by those who were familiar with them.

The results of a pilot survey in which no programs meeting survey criteria were located resulted in the project objectives being revised. Consistent with the activities of the provider association described in Project R-IB, the focus of the survey was turned to identifying community-based programs supporting the career related transportation needs of persons with disabilities. The objective of this effort was to identify exemplary service responses to career-related transportation needs which could be considered for use in project R-IIB, as well as contribute to the repository of employment enhancement interventions described in project R-VIA.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

- This project was completed in August 1995

- A literature review was completed and a recently published document entitled "Issues in Rural Independence & Transportation" produced by ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization) was located. This publication included 1) a literature review on transportation, 2) identified and described model programs and 3) gave recommendations for communities addressing the transportation needs of persons with disabilities. A second document entitled "Coordinating Transportation: Models of Cooperative Arrangements" produced by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services which provided models and guidelines for implementing coordinated transportation service was also secured. These documents largely satisfied the informational needs on transportation for the activities of the providers association described in project R-IB.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None. Project completed.

I. Research Project R-IB

A. Title: Development of a Community-Based Model Collaborative Association Involving Persons With Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers, and Selected Resource Persons

B. Project Dates: January, 1994 - August 4, 1997

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 64-70

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Bob L. Means, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to produce a method to engage community-based rehabilitation service providers, persons with disabilities and selected others (who are directly involved in or influence employment-related services and support) in a process of collaborative needs assessment, planning, and service provision in response to identified employment needs. The result will be a model for the establishment and maintenance of a collaborative association or a group of persons working together to best meet the employment needs of persons with disabilities within the community. The method employed to develop guidelines for the establishment of community-based collaborative activities is the development of a pilot in one community.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. The demonstration phase of this project has been completed and based on the information developed in the demonstration phase a manual to support others efforts to initiate and maintain community-based collaboration supporting the employment of persons with disabilities is in development.

2. The manual has been organized to include sections on: a) a review of community-based collaboration literature with emphasis on persons with disabilities, b) a detailed description of the demonstration project, c) an analysis of the different phases of the demonstration project including

recommendations for improving on the methods and procedures utilized in the demonstration, and d) a review of project outcomes.

3. In support of the section of the manual addressing recommendations on how to improve on the demonstration experience, the community-based providers involved in the demonstration project will be surveyed to systematically identify their recommendations. A structured interview form has been developed for this purpose.

4. Several dissemination activities have been carried out during the reporting period. Major dissemination activities include:

   A. A presentation at the conference, Employment: It's Time, A Statewide Conference on Employment. Region VI Arkansas Continuing Education Program, January 1997, Little Rock, AR.

   B. Consultation and technical assistance to other communities participating in or planning community-based collaborative efforts.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

I. Research Project R-IC

A. Title: Evaluation of the Consequences of Community-based Collaboration on Employment Services

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Subsumed under Project R-IB

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 71-75

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Bob L. Means, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

This project is designed to assess the consequences of the activities described in Project IB (i.e., the development of a collaborative association) on the scope and quality of vocationally-related services in the pilot community.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

This project was initially designed to measure specific consumer outcomes as a result of the demonstration activities described in the original R-1B project. Due to the previously reported changes in that project, the outcome variables moved from specific consumer changes to programmatic changes attributable to the activities of the Providers Association. The results of the demonstration project were previously reported. A formal evaluative presentation concerning the activities of the demonstration project will be included in the manual described in project R-1B.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

Due to changes in Project R-1B this project has been subsumed under R-IB.

Priority Area II: Career Exploration and Preparation for Students with Disabilities

I. Research Project R-IIA

A. Title: Inclusion of Career Awareness and Exploration Services for Students with Disabilities

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: New

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 81-84

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to develop and demonstrate a method for identifying and including career awareness, exploration, and preparation objectives in educational plans such as the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. Prepared initially for research purposes, an IEP Rating Form functions as an Individualized Training Plan (ITP) Checklist which will be published by the Research and Training Center. By using the Checklist at the close of the IEP meeting, participants (student, parents, teachers, counselors, etc.) can determine whether important career objective (postsecondary education, employment, residential options, and linkages to adult agencies) are addressed in the IEP/ITP. IEPs that do not include goals for these areas of student functioning should be revised by the team.

2. The Checklist also requires team members to determine whether students have received instruction in 14 daily living skills. The Checklist reminds plan developers to include programming for daily living goals such as community functioning, transportation, health and medical services, and

personal care. Curriculum materials such as Life Centered Career Education are available to teach these life skills.

3. A doctoral dissertation entitled "Assessing the impact of the Arkansas Transition Project: An analysis of individualized transition plans" was completed as part of this project. The principal investigator worked with the student in the design and implementation of the study. Results indicated that key transition and postschool outcomes for students with disabilities were rarely included in the IEPs sampled in the study. A journal manuscript is underway which will discuss important findings from the research.

4. A research project regarding ways to improve the postsecondary employment outcomes of students with disabilities is linked to this project. Begun as part of a one-year transition grant from the Arkansas Special Education Department, this investigation examines the critical incidents that affect transition into vocational education and the resulting outcomes of students with disabilities. A review of the literature on this topic was published in the Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education. A monograph is planned to describe critical incidents, as reported by special and vocational education teachers, that affect the planning, instruction, and monitoring functions required to improve the vocational education outcomes of students with disabilities.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-IIB

A. Title: Instruction of Students with Disabilities in Career Awareness and Exploration Using Strategies that Involve Special Education, Vocational Education, Transition Programs, and Youth Manpower Programs

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1996

C. Status: Completed

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 85-87

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project was to improve the career awareness, exploration, and preparation outcomes of youth with disabilities via curricular innovations (Life Centered Career Education) requiring collaboration among educational and adult service agencies

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

- This project was completed in 1996 and activities, accomplishments and outcomes reported in the last annual performance report (8/5/94-5/14/96) and published in the Rural Special Education Quarterly.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-IIC

A. Title: Involvement of Special Education, Secondary Education, Vocational Education, Transition Programs, and Youth Manpower Programs in Coordinated Career Services to Students with Disabilities

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1997

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 88-91

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to develop and demonstrate a community-based referral system that involves school, local facilities, and adult agencies in students' transition plans. The system includes forms for making and tracking referrals of students made by school personnel to various community resources. A computer database exists which can be accessed via a spreadsheet software program.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. The Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation has accepted for publication "Improving collaborative school-agency transition planning: a statewide DBMS approach." Scheduled for publication in 1997, the article describes the history and operation of the referral tracking and monitoring system developed in the Arkansas Transition Project.

2. The Research and Training Center also published documentation regarding the operation of the referral tracking system ("The transition referral process: linking students to appropriate services"). This documentation describes system components including the one page common referral form, the Paradox for Windows database software, procedures for monitoring agency response to referrals, and software for preparing reports on system operation (e.g., Atlas GIS Information Mapping System).

Information is included on eligibility requirements and services provided by adult agencies participating in the statewide referral system.

3. Investigators completed a second a second article on system operation focusing on specific research questions presented in the first publication. The Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation accepted this manuscript for publication as a follow-up to the first article describing the DBMS (database management system) approach in Arkansas.

4. Analysis of referral information gathered during a four year period indicated: (a) more students and schools were involved in the system over time, (b) time from referral to agency and project response decreased over time, (c) more students were accepted for services with time, and (d) agency personnel responded more specifically regarding reasons for finding students ineligible for services.

5. Two trends were noted that require attention. School personnel were not referring students with disabilities to more adult services over time. Inappropriate referrals continued to a degree; hence, school personnel still need training in the eligibility requirements and services of adult agencies.

6. With the publication of the two journal articles and the operations manual, Project R-IIC is completed. Individuals interest in information on the operation and outcomes of the referral tacking and monitoring system may contact the Research and Training investigators or the Director of the Arkansas Transition Project at the Arkansas Department of Special Education (Little Rock, AR).

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-IID

A. Title: Development of a Policy Options Database and a Study of IEPs in Demonstration and Nondemonstration Sites

B. Dates: August 4, 1993 - August 4, 1997

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 92-93

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Virginia Johnson, Ed.D.
Barbara Gartin, Ph.D., Professor of Special Education
Cheryl Reed, Graduate Student in Rehabilitation
Yvette Getch, Graduate Student in Rehabilitation
Jim Grover, Graduate Student in Rehabilitation
Virginia Clements, Transition Project Director

III. Project Description

The purpose of this project is to conduct research concerning the transition of young people with disabilities from school to adult life.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. An article summarizing the major issues in providing transition services by rehabilitation counselors and agencies has been drafted and submitted for consideration by a journal. This article, "Rehabilitation counseling services and transition: reflections on coordinated service delivery," reviews the historical role of rehabilitation providers in assisting youth with disabilities to move to adult roles, and makes recommendations for more effective service delivery in accordance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

2. A study was conducted of transition service delivery within Arkansas Rehabilitation Services over a five-year period. We examined the data to determine if there were trends in the time required for transition-age youth to

complete their rehabilitation programs. We hypothesized that the time required for youth to move from the first to the second status in four status pairs (from status 2 to status 10; from status 10 to status 12; from status 12 to 18; and from status 18 to status 26) would decrease over time as compared to a control group, as the agency implemented the IDEA and Rehabilitation Act requirements. A series of four 2x5 ANOVAs were conducted.

3. We found the predicted interaction effect for the 10-12 and 18-26 status pairs along with significant main effects for both group and time. The predicted interaction effect was not found for either the 02-10 or 12-18 status pairs, though there were significant main effects.

4. The study was presented at the Society for Disability Studies meeting in June, 1996.

5. A paper entitled "Youth with disabilities leaving school: The role of rehabilitation professionals in promoting successful transition" was published in the proceedings from the annual meeting of the Society for Disability Studies.

6. We are currently analyzing data on congruence and program quality on IEP/ITPs in demonstration and non-demonstration sites.

7. An article critiquing the minority group model on which the IDEA is based appeared in The Annals, a publication of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

Priority Area III: Community-based Employment Strategies

I. Research Project R-IIIA

A. Title: Demonstrating the Effects of a Community-based Employability Enhancement Clinic Serving Referrals from Secondary and Adult Education, Transition Programs, and Other Manpower Training Programs

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 98-101

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Project Description

This project is designed to (a) develop and implement employability enhancement clinics in community-based programs and (b) evaluate their impact on the employability development of people with disabilities referred from education-based programs, community rehabilitation programs, and the state vocational rehabilitation system.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. The data collection phase for this project has been completed.

2. Findings have been presented in two technical reports and two presentations.

3. Two manuscripts are being prepared for submission to rehabilitation journals.

4. Information generated by this project relates to a model for designing and implementing employment preparation programs in community-based programs, agencies, and organizations.

5. A summary of the activities of this project is as follows:

a.) A collaborative project between the RTC, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Arkansas Department of Special Education, and seven Garland County school districts was developed.

b.) The Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC), with assistance from the RTC, operated an employment preparation program/clinic within the HSRC, working with referrals from the Garland County school districts' special education programs. Students with disabilities in grades 10-12 were accepted into the program.

c.) The RTC provided needed technical assistance to HSRC in developing the employment preparation program which consisted of two components: a) employability assessment, designed to identify employment needs related to choosing, getting, and keeping employment and b) intervention, designed to improve students' employment preparation and outcome.

d.) Data collection was initiated in January, 1995, and continued through 1996.

e.) Pre-post testing was done to assess a number of dependent variables. A preliminary analysis of the data revealed the outcome trend was in the predicted direction for experimental students receiving the program when compared with control students who did not.

f.) Dependent variables examined included: confidence in vocational decision-making, amount of occupational information possessed, career decisiveness, vocational self-awareness, perceived program involvement, basic work habits and behaviors, and, at follow-up, employment preparation and employment status.

g.) A second study was initiated consisting of a collaborative effort between the RTC, the Arkansas Special Education Department, and the Malvern and Arkadelphia School Districts to replicate the program in a secondary school setting.

h.) Training of school personnel to implement the strategy was completed and the program implemented in January, 1996.

i.) Data collection was completed in December, 1996.

6. In summary, a strategy for developing employment preparation programs has been completed and pilot-tested in a comprehensive rehabilitation Center and replicated in a secondary school system.

7. Training of service providers on the use of the strategy is ongoing and will continue through the grant cycle.

8. As a result of project activities employment preparation programs have been implemented in at least three service delivery settings: a comprehensive rehabilitation facility, secondary schools, and community rehabilitation programs.

9. The model developed is effective for developing employment programs. These programs have a positive impact on a number of employment related variables.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-IIIB

A. Title: Characteristics of Persons with Severe Disabilities Who Excel In Independent Living and Career Development

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 102-104. Project change reported on pages 28-30 in Annual Report #30

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Virginia Johnson, Ed.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Project Description

The purpose of this project is to formulate hypotheses about how severely disabled people achieve independent living and career development. A structured in-depth interview procedure is being used with a sample of 30 respondents. A second sample of 50 respondents will be surveyed using a mail questionnaire. Parallel versions of an instrument are being used for both types of data collections to elicit information about developmental histories across occupational, sociological, economic, psychological, political, and health domains.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. Revised structured interview guide based on pilot test and peer review input.
2. Developed consent form to videotape interviews.
3. Conducted 16 videotaped interviews with former recipients of VR services.
4. Conducted 13 nonvideotaped interviews with graduates of post secondary institutions.
5. Created a code book for data entry.
6. Designed an introductory and request cover letter to accompany the mail questionnaire.

7. Identified a select sample to participate in the mail survey.

8. Initiated coding and entry of structured interview data.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

Robert Akridge's retirement resulted in the appointment of Virginia Johnson as Principal Investigator.

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-IIIC

A. Title: Utilizing a Community-based Advocacy Group (the local Multiple Sclerosis Society) to Improve the Employment Retention and Advancement Capabilities of People with Severe Disabilities

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1997

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 105-108

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to (a) develop and field-test a job analysis technique to identify factors that threaten job retention, (b) document the attitudes and actions of employers toward the ADA and the process of reasonable accommodations, (c) identify individual and worksite factors that affect job retention, and (d) disseminate the intervention model to other community organizations representing people with severe disabilities and chronic illnesses.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. With the assistance of Research and Training staff, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society completed a report describing findings from a large-scale project that involved on-the-job follow-up of people with chronic illnesses and an employer survey regarding attitudes toward employing people with chronic illnesses.

2. The on-the-job follow-up phase of the study produced data from 92 employed individuals and their supervisors. These data are being prepared for a more in-depth analysis at the present time.

3. Information is available regarding (a) employees' perceived barriers to accessing the workplace, performing essential functions, mastering job demands, and maintaining job satisfaction and (b) supervisors' ratings of

employee satisfactoriness and suggestions regarding accommodation strategies.

4. Analyses of these data will examine issues such as the factors predicting the job satisfaction of employees with chronic illnesses, barriers to performance of essential functions and possible accommodative solutions, and the factors affecting supervisors' ratings of employee satisfactoriness. Results will provide insights into the employer and employee strategies required to enhance the job mastery and satisfaction of individuals coping with chronic illnesses on the job.

5. In the fall of 1996, the principal investigator and a National MS Society staff member submitted a journal manuscript to the Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling discussing findings from the employer survey (initially presented in the longer report previously mentioned). Although supportive of people with disabilities, respondents did question the "reasonableness" of certain accommodations, (e.g., working at home, afternoon rest period, employer-provided transportation to work, and provision of a support person at work).

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

Priority Area IV: Empowerment Skills and Services

I. Research Project R-IVA

A. Title: Measurement of Empowerment: Development of an Instrument to Assess Individual Status

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 113-115

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Brian Bolton, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Jeffrey Brookings, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to develop an instrument that measures the multidimensional construct of empowerment for use in VR service provision and research.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes

1. The current investigation focuses on the intrapersonal component of empowerment, because it can be argued that empowerment is ultimately a personalogical construct that reflects the degree to which the values and attitudes associated with empowerment have been internalized.

2. Because intrapersonal empowerment is an internalized orientation consisting of traits and behavioral predispositions, it follows that the construct is amenable to measurement by self-report methods.

3. A thorough review of the literature on empowerment in rehabilitation and community psychology established the conceptual foundation for the development of the instrument – a list with definitions of 20 characteristics of the empowered person with a disability.

4. Two hundred forty items that best reflected the 20 facet definitions were administered to a sample of 156 people with disabilities.

5. Factor analysis identified four dimensions of intrapersonal empowerment for people with disabilities: Personal Competence, Group Orientation, Self-Determination, and Positive Sense of Identity as a Person with a Disability.

6. A 64-item instrument was developed to measure the four dimensions, with internal consistency reliabilities between .80 and .89 and interscale correlations ranging from .27 to .59, with an average of .46.

7. The four scales are described as follows:

   Personal Competence - sets challenging goals and works to achieve them, assumes responsibility for one's self, is well organized and disciplined, and understands and relies on one's self.

   Group Orientation - works together with other people, participates willingly in community activities, and assists other people with their problems.

   Self-Determination - stands up for one's rights, expresses opinions without hesitation, and makes decisive choices, often preferring creative solutions.

   Positive Identity - accepts one's disability realistically, doesn't believe disability dominates one's life, and doesn't use disability as an excuse.

8. A manuscript describing the development of the instrument (with the instrument appended) has been submitted for publication.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-IVB

A. Title: Personal Career Planning: Enhancing Self-Direction of the Vocational Planning Process

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1996

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 116-119

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Virginia Johnson, Ed.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to evaluate the impact of a structured intervention called Personal Career Planning (PCP) on empowering persons with severe disabilities to direct their own vocational planning. Based on the Choose, Get, Keep model, PCP includes components from employability training packages previously developed and tested at the ARTCVR.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. Edited PCP modules based on the *Choose* component of the Choose, Get, Keep Model to incorporate findings from the pilot test. The modules are:

   Module 1: Developing and Monitoring Critical Work Behaviors to Meet Employer Expectations

   Module 2: Setting Vocational Objectives

2. Edited PCP modules based on the *Get* component of the Choose, Get, Keep Model to incorporate findings from the pilot test. The modules are:

   Module 3: A Step by Step Approach to Job Interviewing

Module 4: A Model for Overcoming Employer Objections to Use in Negotiations for Job Accommodations

3. Edited PCP modules based on the *Keep* component of the Choose, Get, Keep Model to incorporate findings from the field test. The modules are:

   Module 5: Problem Solving in Common Job Situations

   Module 6: Understanding and Utilizing Mentors

   Module 7: Preparing for and Performing Effectively in Performance Evaluations

4. Initiated preparation of (1) small group training manual, and (2) self-study guide.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

The retirement of Robert Akridge resulted in the appointment of Virginia Johnson as Principal Investigator.

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-IVC

A. Title: Empowering Individuals with Disabilities from Minority Backgrounds

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 120-124

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigators: Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D
Hazel Linton, Ph.D., UAPB

B. Other Project Staff: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Glenda Kennedy, Ed.D., UAPB
Johnny Thomas, Ed.D., UAPB
Philip Aka, Ph.D., UAPB
Irene Henderson, Ph.D., UAPB

III. Project Description

This project allows faculty from historically black colleges and universities to develop and refine research skills by carrying out a research study focusing on the needs of individuals from minority backgrounds. Previous studies have focused on empowering individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds through training in career decision-making and examining consumer choice issues. A new study comparing the attitudes and perceptions of black and white students at a historically black college toward the employment capabilities of individuals with disabilities is being implemented.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. Data collection concerning the satisfaction of rehabilitation clients with the client choice process was completed. A comparative analysis was conducted with race, age, and level of education impact upon the degree of satisfaction expressed.

2. Data have been analyzed and a report of the results is in the process of being published.

3. Results of the project will be disseminated to the RTC National Advisory Council at their annual meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas, June 18-19, 1997.

4. Two additional individuals of African-American descent are currently being trained to conduct rehabilitation research. They are Dr. Philip Aka and Dr. Irene Henderson. These two individuals are being mentored by Dr. Hazel Linton, Dr. Glenda Kennedy and Dr. Johnny Thomas. The entire UAPB team meets bimonthly to refine research skills, develop the data collection instrument, discuss the data collection process, and to discuss project progress. Mentoring for the entire team is provided by Dr. Virginia Johnson and Dr. Roy Farley.

5. Thirty faculty members from UAPB received training in research methodology and conducting rehabilitation research. Twelve individuals who had expressed an interest in further study participated in three follow-up sessions.

6. Technical assistance is being provided to personnel from other historically black colleges and universities by the UAPB team.

7. The two new research team members received technical assistance in the development of the data collection instrument and the data collection process for the new study focusing on attitudes and perceptions toward the employment capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

8. The data collection instrument has been completed and is being reviewed to assure that all the appropriate variables have been identified.

9. The two new research team members are completing the literature review process.

10. A proposal is being written to be submitted in the next NIDRR competition by the expanded research team.

11. The research team at UAPB has established a linkage with the rehabilitation community, community colleges and other Historically Black educational institutions to seek ways to insure collaboration among these entities in rehabilitation research.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-IVD

A. Project Title: Promoting Consumer Empowerment and Involvement During Employment Services.

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 125-128

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.
Roy Farley, Ed.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to utilize a participatory action research team to develop and demonstrate the effectiveness of an employment program for service providers that is designed to promote consumer empowerment. A procedure for an empowering process of program development is also to be developed.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. Monthly to bi-monthly meetings of the program development team were held throughout the year. The team consists of consumers with disabilities, the Director and staff of Family Support Services, and two of the investigators. For the first part of the year the group focused on what the barriers to employment were for consumers served by the agency and on what type of employment programs would be most helpful to consumers.

2. The team surveyed local employers to identify barriers to employment of people with disabilities. The data from the survey were analyzed.

3. Based on discussion in the group, the results of the employer survey, a meeting with a representative group of consumers of the agency, and the desires of the Director of Family Support Services, a decision was made to begin developing a self-employment program. The program development team has focused on the designing of a self-employment program since the beginning of the calendar year.

4. A paper was completed and presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Disability Studies (June 13, 1996) entitled "Power to People with Disabilities: Empowerment in Developing Employment Programs." The paper presents the project's theoretical conceptualization on power and empowerment and demonstrates how this conceptualization can help guide development of empowering employment services.

5. Completed and submitted a paper for publication entitled: "Power to People with Disabilities: Empowerment Issues in Employment Programming".

6. A qualitative database is being developed based on extensive transcripts and researcher field notes on the meetings of the program development team.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

PROJECT STATUS

Priority Area V: Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process

I. Research Project R-VA

A. Title: Analysis of a Statewide Database to Address Fundamental Issues in VR Eligibility Determination

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 134-137

II. Faculty

Principal Investigator: Brian Bolton, Ph.D.

Other Project Staff: Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.
James Bellini, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to use assessment technology to address unresolved issues in vocational rehabilitation eligibility determination, such as the functional definition of severe disability and an empirically defensible strategy for implementing the "order of selection" mandate.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. Current regulations suggest that problems in definition and identification of individuals with the most severe disabilities continue to impede widespread implementation of the 1973 mandate to serve applicants with the most severe handicaps first. When establishing an order of selection, state rehabilitation agencies must give first priority to individuals whose disabling conditions are most severe in terms of functional loss and service need as these relate to employability. The most suitable basis for establishing a defensible order of selection scheme is the careful and systematic assessment of functional limitations at the point of application for VR services, a view supported by the Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

2. Research questions addressed how rehabilitation counselors use two major sources of diagnostic information, personal history data and judged functional limitations, to make VR eligibility decisions. The diagnostic variables accounted for 44% for the total variation in counselors' eligibility decisions. Results provided strong evidence for the validity of rehabilitation counselors' eligibility decisions and demonstrated the value of quantifying the diagnostic process using a comprehensive rating instrument like the Functional Assessment Inventory (FAI).

3. The quantification of applicants' functional limitations and personal history data properly belongs to the clinical measurement phase while the actual counselor eligibility decision belongs to the clinical prediction phase. From the perspective of both rehabilitation counselor training and sound state agency practice, it is recommended that the two-step diagnostic process be explicitly maintained.

4. Operationalizing the VR eligibility determination process as a sequence of two discrete phases makes possible careful procedural studies of the relationship between the diagnostic information and subsequent eligibility decisions, and will ultimately result in greater accountability for the state VR agency eligibility determination process.

5. Results indicate that individuals who were eligible for services and identified by counselors as severely disabled had more severe functional limitations in key life areas than applicants who were eligible for services and identified as nonseverely disabled. It can be concluded that rehabilitation counselors classified VR applicants appropriately to provide priority services to individuals with the most severe disabilities.

6. Both personal history data (SSD) and ratings of functional limitations (FAI) of VR applicants constitute valuable diagnostic information for rehabilitation counselors, because the SSD and the FAI are known to be robust predictors of successful outcomes. However, statistical results indicate that the SSD and the FAI are relatively independent sources of information.

7. It can be concluded that important personal history data about VR applicants is not being fully used and, therefore, it is recommended that SSD item scores be reported to counselors in a standardized format before the scope of case study is completed. Providing such information on clients' social disadvantages would also enable the counselor and the

client to plan for ways to overcome the detrimental effects of social disadvantagement on rehabilitation outcome.

8. Four SSD variables (education, severity, secondary disability, and age) predominated in determining counselors' ratings of four FAI scales (cognitive, severity, vocational qualifications, and physical condition) These are the central variables that account for the relationships between applicants' personal history and counselors' ratings of applicants' functional limitations.

9. Results have substantial relevance to the VR eligibility decision process. This is because applicants' personal history and functional limitations are the basis for counselors' decisions. The dimensions of influence that explain the intersection of personal history and judged functional limitations strongly support the validity of the eligibility determination process.

10. Multiple services, time in rehabilitation, and service costs operationalize the concept of service intensity using data gathered routinely by state VR agencies. Results indicate that service intensity is a multidimensional construct, and that all three measures contribute unique information about VR service provision. Service cost is an important indicator of rehabilitation needs and VR resource allocation, and should be included as a measure of service intensity.

11. The definition of severe disability suggests substantial overlap of those clients who require multiple services and those who require extended time in rehabilitation. Analyses of VR service provision indicate that this overlap is actually minimal. Clients who receive more services may not require more time in rehabilitation or incur higher service costs. Therefore, each measure of service intensity is an important factor in identifying clients with significant service needs.

12. Results suggest that case complexity is a key to operationalizing multiple services over extended time in the eligibility process. In other words, service intensity reflects the totality and complexity of rehabilitation service need rather than needs related to functional limitations only. Individuals who have rehabilitation needs in multiple life areas are more likely to require multiple services over extended time than individuals who have less complex needs. Therefore, it is recommended that in identifying clients with severe disabilities for

priority service, counselors attend to rehabilitation needs associated with the total life context rather than need for specific services.

13. Currently, the multiple services over extended time criterion is not adequately defined or operationalized for identifying severe disability. Therefore, it is critically important to examine the relationships between clients' functional limitations and the services they receive, in order to establish linkages among the key variables and thereby provide agency counselors and administrators with an empirical basis for decisions about severity of disability and service priority in the context of order of selection.

14. Factor analyses of the 30 behavioral ratings of the FAI resulted in a definitive scoring system for the general VR population and five disability groups (orthopedic, medical, psychiatric, MR, LD). The six general factor scales are: Adaptive Behavior, Cognition, Physical Capacity, Motor Functioning, Communication, and Vocational Qualifications. The scales are slightly different for the five disability groups.

15. A Functional Capacities Computer Report program for scoring the FAI has been developed for the Arkansas Rehabilitation Service. Using the Arkansas normative base, percentile scores are calculated for the six general factor scales and six appropriate disability group factor scales. Item scores are reported for the behavioral ratings, the specific strengths, and the two global judgments (severity of disability and prediction of employability).

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

PROJECT STATUS

I. Research Project R-VB

A. Title: Translating Vocational Assessment Data into Implications for Job Counseling and Placement via Computer-generated Reports

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 138-141

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.
B. Other Project Staff: Brian Bolton, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

During the past six years the Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation (ARTCVR) has published eight employability assessment instruments that have been widely used by professionals in state VR agencies, rehabilitation agencies, and independent living centers. The goal of this project is to develop computer-generated reports for one of these instruments and to expand the existing computer-generated reports for two other instruments. In addition, a computer-generated report for the Functional Assessment Inventory is to be developed.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes

1. The Employability Maturity Interview computer-generated report was completed. The report provides graphical portrayals of norms for the overall EMI and for three scales for veterans and rehabilitation center populations. Norms for three disability groups are provided for the rehabilitation Center population. The report shows the performance matrix and gives recommendations for interventions based on the matrix. A listing of resources to aid in the intervention is also provided.

2. The Manual for the Employability Maturity Interview Computer Report was completed.

3. An article "The Employability Maturity Interview Computer Report: A Tool For Assessing Vocational Readiness" was prepared and accepted for publication.

4. A computer-generated report, the Functional Capacities Report, that scores the Functional Assessment Inventory and provides normative comparisons has been developed. The scoring system is based on a factor analysis of the FAI conducted by the investigators. The scoring system reflects the different factor structures found for five different disability groups and for an overall disability group. Different norms are provided for the different disability groups. The programming of the Functional Capacities Report is currently underway.

5. Normative data for the Work Personality Profile (WPP) for 629 individuals have been obtained from 18 different agencies. The data have been analyzed and frequencies for norms generated for the overall sample and for seven disability groups: severe and moderate mental retardation, mild mental retardation, other developmental disabilities, central nervous system disabilities, orthopedic, mental illness, and substance abuse.

6. A literature review and an analysis of supported employment data collected in Arkansas identified eighteen of the most common jobs for persons working in supported employment. The investigators developed a questionnaire to generate ratings of the importance of nine worker characteristics measured by the WPP to performance of the eighteen jobs. The investigators contacted 24 experts (persons working in supported employment placements) at five different agencies to fill out the questionnaire. The investigators analyzed the data including calculation of interrater reliabilities and mean ratings of the nine worker characteristics for each of eighteen jobs.

7. The investigators developed a preliminary system for assigning job matches for individuals based on nine worker characteristics measured by the WPP. (The revised WPP computer-generated report will provide job match information.)

8. The investigators continued with the literature search identifying environmental and non-aversive behavioral interventions for improving poor performance on behavior areas assessed by the WPP. The investigators began preparation of short written descriptions of these

interventions which will be included as recommendations in the revised WPP computer-generated report.

9. The investigators began design of the WPP computer-generated report.

10. A second normative sample of 175 completed Work Temperament Inventory questionnaires has been obtained from a statewide evaluation facility and the data entered into a computer file for analysis.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

A computer-generated report for the Functional Assessment Inventory (FAI) will be developed instead of a computer-generated report for the Job Seeking Skills Assessment (JSSA). There has been greater interest expressed from the field for a computer report for the FAI than for the JSSA. Previously available scoring systems for the FAI have not taken into account differences in the factor structure of the FAI for different disability groups, as does the scoring system used in this computer-generated report.

I. Research Project R-VC

A. Title: Demonstration of Technologies to Improve Job Preparation Skills of Rehabilitation Counselors

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 142-146

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Dan Cook, Ph.D.
Brain Bolton, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is two-fold: (a) describe quality employability counseling from the perspective of successful rehabilitation counselors and (b) design training and feedback technologies that enhance the counselors' skills in helping people with severe disabilities achieve employment outcomes.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. Findings from the project were presented to counselors from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and other rehabilitation professionals attending the RCEP Employment Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas in January, 1997.

2. Based on results of a qualitative study, the presentation addressed the rehabilitation counseling implications of the philosophies and strategies used by a group of exemplary rehabilitation counselors employed by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (N = 11). The counselors were selected for the study and deemed exemplary based either on outstanding case service statistics (high case closure rates and cost effective use of funds) or peer nominations (identified by other counselors as an individual skilled in working with people with severe disabilities). Following the presentation,

a panel of practicing counselors reacted to the findings as well as discussed their techniques for enhancing the employment outcomes of clients with severe disabilities.

3. Serving as the basis for the conference presentation, the principal investigator co-authored a manuscript (submitted for publication to the Journal of Rehabilitation) entitled "Improving employment outcomes through quality rehabilitation counseling (QRC)". First published in monograph form by the Research and Training Center (see previous annual report), the journal manuscript highlighted important counselor beliefs such as the need for counselor initiative and creativity in the placement process, the importance of the client's work ethic and optimism about returning to work, the recognition that additional resources are needed to meet the service needs of people with severe disabilities, and the need for both an ecological and individual focus when evaluating the needs of people with severe disabilities.

4. Information in the monograph and journal manuscript will serve as the basis for an inservice counselor training session involving participants in examining the (a) systems and logic that exemplary counselors use to serve people with severe disabilities, (b) suggested best practices for improving employment outcomes, and (c) possible solutions to the resource limitations faced by all counselors.

5. The principal investigator co-authored a draft of a second report on the exemplary counselor's perceptions of the top priority counseling tasks required to improve the employment outcomes of people with severe disabilities. When asked to specify the most important task, five of the eleven counselors identified comprehensive client evaluation. In the report the counselors described the factors that affect their completion of a high priority task such as client evaluation.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-VD

A. Title: Demonstration of Technology to Improve Job Placement Skills of Rehabilitation Counselors

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 147-150

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Richard T. Roessler, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to demonstrate assessment and training technologies that improve the counselor's abilities to provide job placement and postemployment services. Activities focus on identifying postemployment or job retention needs, developing interventions to meet those needs, and demonstrating those interventions in rehabilitation settings.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. Research on the postemployment needs of 35 employees who are blind or visually impaired (accepted for publication in the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness) was completed using the Work Experience Survey (WES). The WES proved to be an appropriate ecological assessment for identifying barriers and accommodations affecting the ability of people with disabilities to retain their jobs. Hence, it provides a useful tool for identifying job maintenance needs and structuring postemployment counseling.

2. This project also resulted in a strategy for conducting job retention assessment and counseling for employees with chronic illnesses. Described in a book chapter (Employment Issues and Multiple Sclerosis), and a journal article (Work), the approach demonstrates how to identify barriers to job retention and incorporate accommodations in a career

maintenance plan. Measurers are reviewed which provide insights into a person's ability to resume and retain employment, (e.g., The Work Assessment Scale [WAS], The Work Experience Survey [WES], and the Goldberg Scale).

3. Pertinent to the goals of this project, the principal investigator co-authored an article describing the importance of enhancing the self-efficacy and outcome expectations of people with MS regarding job-seeking and retaining tasks (published in Work). Based on a social learning perspective, the article described how four positive learning experiences enhance efficacy and outcome expectations (e.g., performance accomplishment, vicarious learning by observing others, verbal persuasion and encouragement, and control of negative affective states). The article reviewed a placement planning seminar, Accommodations Planning Team Seminar, developed in another RT grant (Project APT) that incorporates the four sources of learning to enable participants to develop the skills to request accommodations from their employers and to organize and conduct a job search.

4. Information on the job retention assessment and counseling strategy, the job maintenance needs of employees with severe disabilities, and the placement planning seminar will be integrated into an inservice training session designed to help counselors meet the needs of individuals with chronic illnesses.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-VE

A. Title: Self-Employment for People with Disabilities

B. Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 151-153

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.
Doug Main, Graduate Student in Rehabilitation
Yvette Getch, Ph.D., Assistant Professor,
University of Georgia
Charles Palmer, Graduate Student in Rehabilitation

III. Project Description

The purpose of this project is to conduct research into self-employment for people with disabilities in an effort to provide information and methods which will promote appropriate utilization of self-employment.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments, & Outcomes:

1. An article entitled "Self-employment for people with disabilities: A preliminary analysis of Arkansas VR closures and an examination of the microenterprise model for promoting economic self-sufficiency and social change" appeared in the Switzer Monograph published by the National Rehabilitation Association.

2. The principal investigator made an invited presentation at the Common Threads conference sponsored by the RTC at the University of Montana.

3. Researchers are analyzing RSA 911 data for four recent fiscal years. We will be determining whether there are any notable trends in the use of self-employment as a VR outcome; whether there are differences in the demographic characteristics of individuals closed into self-employment as

compared to those closed into competitive employment; what are the service costs and histories of individuals closed into self-employment as compared to competitive employment closures; and what variables predict the use of self-employment as a closure.

4. A presentation of preliminary findings from the qualitative study of self-employed persons with disabilities was presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Disability Studies.

5. The data analysis of qualitative interviews of individuals in self-employment is underway. The interview transcripts have been open-coded into over 120 codes. Researchers are now axial coding the interview data to permit the development of logic diagrams.

6. A presentation on self-employment was made at the annual meeting of the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association/American Rehabilitation Counseling Association.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

I. Research Project R-VF

A. Title: Technology Assistance Services: A Program Evaluation, Technical Assistance, and Service Project

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1995 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 154-155

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D., CRC

B. Other Project Staff: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.

III. Project Description

The objective of this project is to provide technical assistance, consultation and service to the Technology Assistance Services (TAS) Program in Arkansas. The TAS Program is designed to provide and support a statewide system for enabling Arkansans with disabilities to access the technology they need in order to have greater control over their lives, become more productive, and to better interact with nondisabled individuals in their communities. The goal of this project is to assist the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to conduct an ongoing evaluation of technology needs in Arkansas including the need for information, training (educators, evaluators, families, and users), funding, access, marketing, and public awareness, equipment exchange, interagency cooperation, and networking with other public and private agencies.

The project is a jointly sponsored endeavor between the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and the ARTCVR. It is targeted toward individuals with severe disabilities.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. Provided technical assistance during development of a computerized system for information and referral services.

2. Provided technical assistance during development of a computerized system for the equipment loan program.

3. Provided technical assistance during development of a computerized system for the equipment exchange program.

4. Continued to participate in selection of topics and arrangement for printing upcoming issues of AT Insights (ICAN's quarterly newsletter). Topics selected were medicaid and private insurance, managed care, federal mandates for technology in education, durable medical equipment, and technology recycling.

5. Revised evaluation criteria for three ICAN RFPs on (a) cultural diversity, (b) employment training, and (c) rural service delivery.

6. Reviewed NIDRR reporting requirements designed to reduce paperwork. ICAN was one of three states selected to pilot the NIDRR reporting process. Contributed to a report on outcomes of the reporting systems on laws, regulations, policies, practices, knowledge, and skills.

7. Participated in restructuring of ICAN goals and objectives for compliance with required initiatives in the Tech Act.

8. Participated in defining research issues, contract parameters, and possible outcomes of managed care involved in providing AT to adults in Arkansas.

9. Participated in planning to ensure (a) Arkansans with disabilities are involved in designing managed care and (b) legislators are educated on adult AT issues.

10. Responded to ICAN initiatives and proposed activities for Year 8 (1996-1997).

11. Reviewed results of the ICAN Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

12. Contributed to ICAN Research and Evaluation Committee efforts to obtain databases from the RESNA National Survey (Louisiana and Arkansas).

13. Edited ICAN Training Evaluation Survey questionnaire.

14. Participated in revisions for the ICAN RFP on a rural needs survey.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes:

None

Priority Area VI: Employability Information and Dissemination Utilization

I. Research Project R-VIA

A. Title: Establishment and Operation of a Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center on Employment Preparation for Persons with Disabilities

B. Project Dates: April 1, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

D. Grant Application Reference: Pages 158-160

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Project Description

The goal of this project is to establish, operate, and evaluate activities designed to organize, synthesize, and disseminate employment related information to the Center's target audiences and provide technical assistance to facilitate their implementation.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. As reported in the previous annual performance report, activities of this project have been integrated with the ongoing activities of the Material Development and Dissemination Center (MDDC).

2. Employment-related materials developed by the RTC have been organized, synthesized and translated (as appropriate) into a variety of accessible formats.

3. The availability of the material has been communicated to the RTC's target audience through a variety of methods (e.g., brochures, exhibits,

catalogs, pamphlets, presentations). See list of exhibits in Dissemination Section.

4. A survey has been implemented to determine the material's (a) use, (b) helpfulness, (c) benefits, and (d) degree of customer satisfaction.

5. Preliminary findings reveal that 76% of the respondents to the survey report they use the material in their work or daily living. Ninety-six percent report they are satisfied with material with an average 8.4 satisfaction rating on a 10-point scale ranging from 1 = very dissatisfied to 10 = very satisfied. Ninety-nine percent found the material helpful in one or more ways. Eighty-three percent reported it increased their access to and use of new employment material and/or it increased their knowledge and skills. Seventy-eight percent reported that it helped or would help them to more effectively and efficiently provide services to their consumers thereby improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the service delivery system. When asked to report the actual or potential impact of the material on the lives of people with disabilities the results were as follows. Eighty percent reported it would increase consumers knowledge and skills in the area of employment. Seventy-eight percent reported it would result in consumers having access to a more improved and efficient service delivery system and more knowledgeable and skilled service providers. Ninety-four percent reported consumers would be better prepared for employment and the world of work, and achieve an improved employment status.

6. These findings have been published in a book chapter and disseminated at various meetings of constituency groups to include the Center Advisory Council and Center review meetings.

7. Technical assistance has been provided to numerous individuals and organizations on the implementation of products.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

Dissemination

Introduction

The dissemination program is designed to distribute and transfer new employment-related knowledge, information and products to the widest possible audience. A variety of strategies are used and are described in the grant application in pages 164-182. The following is a description of the results and accomplishments of the implementation of those strategies. They fall under the categories of publications, presentations, and material development and distribution.

Publications

This strategy is used to disseminate new information via a variety of outlets in order to reach a broad audience. This variety includes both audience (i.e., service providers, consumers, educators & scholars) as well as outlets (i.e., journals, books, resource documents, newsletters, and electronic means). During this reporting period 35 manuscripts were published as listed below:

Bellini, J., Bolton, B., & Neath, J. (1996). Diagnostic determinants of rehabilitation counselor eligibility decisions. Journal of Rehabilitation Administration, 20, 93-106.

Bellini, J., Bolton, B., & Neath, J. (1996). Diagnostic determinants of rehabilitation counselor eligibility decisions. Journal of Rehabilitation Administration, 20(2), 93-106.

Bellini, J., Bolton, B., & Neath, J. (in press). Operationalizing multiple services over extended time as a measure of service intensity. Journal of Rehabilitation Administration.

Bolton, B. (in press). Diagnostic Screening Batteries. In J.C. Impara & J.C. Conoley (Eds.), The Fourteenth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press.

Bolton, B. (in press). Personal Values Questionnaire. In J.C. Impara & J.C. Conoley (Eds.), The Fourteenth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press.

Bolton, B., & Brookings, J. (1996). Development of a multifaceted definition of empowerment. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 39, 256-264.

Bolton, B., Bellini, J., & Neath, J. (1996). Influence of applicants' personal history on counselors' ratings of functional limitations. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 39, 265-275.

Bolton, B., & Teal, C. (Eds.) (1997). Twenty-five Years of Workshops on Multivariate Research: 1973-1997. Wichita, KS: Society for Applied Multivariate Research.

Cook, D., Bolton, B., Bellini, J., & Neath, J. (1997). A statewide investigation of the rehabilitation counselor generalist hypothesis. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 40, (3), 192-201.

Farley, R.C., & Schriner, K. (1997). Service delivery strategies for promoting employment outcomes. In Menz, F., et al. (Eds.), Lessons for Improving Employment of People with Disabilities from Vocational Rehabilitation Research (pp. 119-134). Menomonie, WI: University of Wisconsin - Stout.

Farley, R.C., Parkerson, S., & Taylor, J. (1996). Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center School-to-Work Enhancement Program: A preliminary analysis of component I [Interim report to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center]. Fayetteville, AR: Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

Grover, J.M., Reed, C.A., & Schriner, K. (in press). Youth with disabilities leaving school: The role of rehabilitation professionals in promoting successful transition. In E. Makas (Ed.), 1996 Proceedings of the Society for Disability Studies. Lewiston, ME.

Guy, B., Schriner, K., Goldberg, M., & McDonald, S. (1996). Family and youth engagement in transition. Minneapolis, MN: National Transition Network.

Johnson, V.A. (1996). Native American students with disabilities: Unmet needs. Transition, Technology, and Training. New Orleans, LA: Proceedings of the Association of Higher Education and Disability annual conference.

Johnson, V.A., & Akridge, R. (1996). Commitment to client choice: A national demonstration of technologies to increase informed client choice in rehabilitation services. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Johnson, V.A., & Dillingham, J. (1997). Technology to aid clients in employment. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation. Unpublished report of the Twenty-second Institute on Rehabilitation Issues.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (1997). Practical Measurers for Assessing Work Performance in Students with Disabilities. San Antonio, TX: Proceedings of the Association of Rural Special Education Annual Conference.

Johnson, V.A. (1997). State Rehabilitation Advisory Council Effectiveness: A National Survey of SRAC Chairpersons. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Neath, J. (1996). Student satisfaction with Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center at the time of exit review (four quarterly reports: April-June 1996, July-September 1996, October-December, 1996, January - March 1997). Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas, Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

Neath, J. (1996). Patient satisfaction survey (four quarterly reports: April-June 1996, July-September 1996, October-December, 1996, January - March 1997). Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas, Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

Neath, J. (in press). [Review of the book of Pushing the Limits: Disabled dykes produce culture]: Disability Studies Quarterly.

Neath, J., & Bolton, B. (in press). Manual for the Employability Maturity Interview. Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas, Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

Neath, J., & Bolton, B. (in press). The Employability Maturity Interview Computer Report: A tool for assessing material readiness. Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Bulletin.

Neath, J., Bellini, J., & Bolton, B. (in press). Dimensions of the Functional Assessment Inventory for five disability groups. Rehabilitation Psychology.

Neath, J., & Schriner, K. (in press). Power to people with disabilities: Empowerment in developing employment programs. In E. Makas (Ed.), 1996 Proceedings of the Society for Disability Studies. Lewiston, ME: Society for Disability Studies.

Peterson, R., & Roessler, R. (in press). Improving collaborative school-agency transition-planning. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Roessler, R. (1996). The role of assessment in enhancing the vocational success of people with multiple sclerosis. Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment and Rehabilitation, 6, 191-201.

Roessler, R. (1996). Vocational assessment strategies. In P. Rumrill (Ed.), Employment Issues in Multiple Sclerosis. New York: Demos Vermande.

Roessler, R., Kirk, M., & Brown, P. (1997). Chronic illness and return to work: A social cognitive perspective. Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment and Rehabilitation, 8, 189-196.

Roessler, R., Brown, P., Reed, C., & Getch, Y. (1996). Strategies for improving the outcome of students with mild disabilities in vocational education. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 19, 12-16.

Roessler, R., Schriner, K., Peterson, R., Munson, S., & Clements, V. (1996). Linking students to adult agencies: Evaluating the operation of a statewide DBMS approach. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Rumrill, P., Roessler, R., Battersby, J., & Schuyler, B. (in press). Situational assessment of the accommodation needs of employees with visual impairments and blindness. Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness.

Shields, T.G., Schriner, K., & Schriner, K. (1996). The disability voice in American politics: Political participation with disabilities in the 1994 election. American Political Science Review.

Schriner, K. (1997). Strategies that achieve improved employment outcomes. In Menz, F., et al. (Ed.), Lessons for Improving Employment of People with Disabilities from Vocational Rehabilitation Research. Menomonie, WI: University of Wisconsin - Stout.

Schriner, K.F., & Neath, J. (1996). Self-employment for people with disabilities: A preliminary analysis of Arkansas VR closures and an examination of the microenterprise model for promoting economic self-sufficiency and social change [monograph]. Washington, DC: National Rehabilitation Association Switzer Seminar.

Presentations

Presentations are used to transfer new information and encourage utilization in a variety of settings. This involves disseminating information at national, regional, state and local conferences and meetings as well as the presentation of information via such avenues as radio, television, and other electronic means. During this reporting period Center faculty delivered 28 presentations at a variety of meetings involving professional groups as well as consumers. Following is a list of those presentations:

Brookings, J.B., & Bolton, B. (1996, August). Development and psychometric evaluation of a multidimensional measure of psychological empowerment. American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada.

Grover, J.M., Reed, C.A., & Schriner, K. (1996, June). Youth with disabilities leaving school: The role of rehabilitation professionals in promoting successful transitions. Society for Disability Studies annual meeting, Washington, DC.

Johnson, V.A. (1996, July). Native American students with disabilities: Unmet needs. Association of Higher Education and Disability annual convention, New Orleans, LA.

Johnson, V.A. (1996, October). Your vocational self concept: A key to employment success. Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, 11th International Convention, Orlando, FL.

Johnson, V.A. (1996, November). Practical measures for assessing workers with disabilities. Kroger Company, Hot Springs, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (1997, January). Tailoring your own job market survey: Internet sources of Job, career, and employment trend information. Region VI Continuing Education Program (RCEP) Statewide Conference, Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (1997, March). Practical measures for assessing work performance in students with severe disabilities. American Council on Rural Special Education, San Antonio, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (1997, May). Tailoring your own labor market survey: Internet sources of job, career, and employment trend information. Region VI Continuing Education Program (RCEP) Statewide Conference, Albuquerque, NM.

Johnson, V.A. & Parkerson, S. (1996, September). Practical measures for assessing work performance in individuals with severe disabilities. Conway Human Development Center's annual regional conference on developmental disabilities, Little Rock, AR.

Means, B.L. (1996, June). Life and career adjustment strategies. Local community study group, Hot Springs, AR.

Means, B.L. (1996, September). Introduction to the Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation for preparing people with disabilities for employment. 4th Annual Regional Conference on Developmental Disabilities, Little Rock, AR.

Means, B.L. (1996, October). Managing anger to enhance employment retention. Substance Abuse Program, Hot Springs, AR.

Means, B.L. (1997, January). Community Collaboration. Employment: It's Time, A Statewide Conference on Employment, Little Rock, AR.

Means, B.L. (1997, February). Rehabilitation Research. National Forum of State Operated Rehabilitation Centers, Hot Springs, AR.

Means, B.L. (1997, March). Approaches for Facilitating Empowerment in the Vocational Assessment Process. Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association National Forum, Colorado Springs, CO.

Menz, F., Schriner, K., & Sanderson, P. (1996, July). Research contributions to employment. National Conference on Effective Employment Strategies for Individuals with Disabilities, Washington, DC.

Neath, J., & Schriner, K. (1996, June). Power to people with disabilities: Empowerment in developing employment programs. Society for Disability Studies Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

Palmer, C., Main, D., Getch, Y., & Schriner, K. (March 1997). Rehabilitation strategies for promoting self-employment for people with disabilities. 14th Annual Professional Development Symposium, Alliance for Rehabilitation Counseling, Tampa, FL.

Roessler, R. (1996, June). Moderator. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services/State Independent Living Council Town Meeting, Springdale, AR.

Roessler, R. (1997, January). Strategies to improve the quality and quantity of employment outcomes. Regional Continuing Education Program Statewide Conference on Employment, Little Rock, AR.

Schriner, K. (1996, June). Choice in rehabilitation: A research perspective. American Association on Mental Retardation, San Antonio, TX.

Schriner, K. (1996, July). Strategies for promoting employment outcomes. National Conference on Promoting Employment for People with Disabilities: Contributions of NIDRR Research and Training Centers, Washington, D.C.

Schriner, K. (1996, September). Promoting self-employment among people with disabilities: The microenterprise model. Common Threads Conference, Research and Training Center on Rural Rehabilitation, University of Montana, Missoula, MT.

Schriner, K., Getch, Y., Palmer, C., & Main, D. (1996, June). Working for yourself: Perceptions and experiences of entrepreneurs with disabilities. Society for Disability Studies annual meeting, Washington DC.

Schriner, K., Guy, B., Goldberg, M., & McDonald, S. (1996, June). Parent and family engagement in transition. Results of the National Transition Network evaluation. National Transition Network Advisory Board Meeting, Washington, DC.

Sullivan, N., & Johnson, V.A. (1996, July). Arkansas Rehabilitation Services commitment to Client Choice Project. National Conference on Effective Employment Strategies for Individuals with Disabilities, Washington, D.C.

Vire, K., & Schriner, K. (1996, November). Promoting service delivery improvement through systems change. Arkansas APSE Conference, Lake DeGray, AR.

Young, C., Johnson, V.A., & Nichols, C. (1996, July). Vocational rehabilitation for migratory and seasonal farm workers with disabilities: consortium approach to developing the capacity to implement and inter/intraservice delivery system. Delta Area Rural Initiative (DARI) annual executive board meeting, Memphis, TN.

Materials Development and Distribution

The Center, in conjunction with the Materials Development and Dissemination Center, serves as an international resource on employment of people with disabilities. Utilizing the services of the Materials Development and Dissemination Center as well as secondary dissemination units the widespread distribution, in usable formats, of research findings and products is achieved.

"Develop", "promote" and "disseminate" represent the three objectives of materials development and distribution. Objective one is to translate new knowledge into materials that can be readily adopted by and integrated into a variety of settings. During this reporting period the Center has translated new information into a number of useable products such as training packages and curricular material on career assessment and planning, resource documents on a variety of employment-related topics, self-study programs, computer software on assessment, and assessment instruments. These products are included in the list of publications in the previous section. They are made available in a variety of formats to insure accessibility to a wide audience with varying disabilities and from diverse cultures.

The second objective is to "promote" research and training products to make them known to Center target audiences. This is achieved through direct mail marketing and the use of brochures, pamphlets, flyers, and catalogs. During this reporting period 6,025 promotional catalogs and brochures were disseminated. Other strategies for promoting research and training products are presentations, exhibits, and displays at state, regional, and national conferences. During the reporting period, Center employability development products developed during the current cycle and in previous years were displayed and presented at the following major conferences and meetings attended by an estimated audience of 10,270.

Farley, R.C. (1996, July). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. National Employment Conference, Washington, DC. (12 hours, estimated audience 500).

Farley, R.C., & Parkerson, S. (1996, November). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. The Association for People with Severe Handicaps (TASH) National Conference, New Orleans, LA. (24 hours; estimated audience 2300).

Johnson, V.A. (1996, June). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc., (SHHH) annual convention, Orlando, FL. (12 hours; estimated audience 1000).

Johnson, V.A. (1996, October). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc., (SHHH) 11th international convention, Orlando, FL. (12 hours; estimated audience 1000).

Johnson, V.A. (1997, March). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. American Council on Rural Special Education, San Antonio, TX. (12 hours; estimated audience 700).

Johnson, V.A. (1997, March). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Southwest Center Vocational Services, San Antonio, TX. (12 hours; estimated audience 20).

Means, B. (1997, March). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association National Forum, Colorado Springs, CO. (18 hours; estimated audience 800).

Means, B., & Johnson, V.A. (1996, July). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), New Orleans, LA. (12 hours; estimated audience 1000).

Means, B.L., & Parkerson, S. (1996, August). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Arkansas Department of Education Conference, Little Rock, AR. (12 hours; estimated audience 1600).

Parkerson, S. (1996, November). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Council for Exceptional Children, Hot Springs, AR. (16 hours; estimated audience 400).

Parkerson, S., & Johnson, V.A. (1996, September). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Houston Area Rehabilitation Association annual training conference, Galveston, TX. (12 hours; estimated audience 250).

Parkerson, S., Johnson, V.A., & Means, B. (1996, September). Research and training products that facilitate employment preparation and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Conway Human Development Center's annual regional conference on developmental disabilities, Little Rock, AR. (8 hours, estimated audience 700).

The third objective of materials development and distribution is to "disseminate" Center research and training products to the widest possible audience. In addition to distributing material through training, educational programs, and presentations, the Center uses direct mail dissemination to introduce research and training products to service settings. During this reporting period 10,075 products were disseminated, including 7,175 copies of assessment instruments, manuals, computer software, employability enhancement interventions (training guides, workbooks, audio and videotapes, and slides), peer helping materials, and resource documents (research reports, monographs, IRI documents, manuals, etc.). Instructional brochures on topics such as job seeking skills and utilizing families in rehabilitation totaled 2,900. These products were developed during previous grant periods as well as the current grant cycle.

Worldwide utilization of Center publications is suggested by the geographic diversity of requests for publications from Portugal, Sweden, Canada, Australia, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Poland, Pakistan, Argentina, New Zealand, Germany, Korea, Netherlands, Spain, Ireland, Denmark, Japan, Egypt, Mexico, Finland, and Great Britain.

PROJECT STATUS

The utilization of Center products in an array of settings is suggested by the types of organizations and individuals ordering Center material. Included are rehabilitation facilities, state agencies, universities and colleges, hospitals, independent living programs, consumer organizations, rehabilitation professionals, government offices, continuing education programs, private industry, and libraries.

Customer/constituent reaction to these products is summarized in the section on Feedback on pages 98-99 Research Project R-VIA progress report on page 57.

Training, Education, and Technical Assistance

Introduction

The training, education, and technical assistance program contributes to the achievement of Center objectives 2 and 3. The program is designed to 1) conduct a planned and systematic sequence of instruction that impacts predetermined skills and knowledge and 2) relate research findings to practical applications in planning, policy making, program administration, and delivery of service to individuals with disabilities.

Training and education activities are conducted at three levels: 1) preservice to prepare individuals planning for careers in rehabilitation service delivery and in disability and rehabilitation research areas. Activities include lectures, classes, seminars, independent studies and internships carried out in collaboration with undergraduate and graduate levels of education; 2) in-service to increase the knowledge, skills, and impact the attitudes of individuals in the disability service delivery field as well as those currently conducting disability and rehabilitation research. Activities include conferences, workshops, seminars, presentations, and self-study; and 3) public education to increase the knowledge and skills and impact the attitudes of consumers with disabilities and community leaders. Activities include presentations, seminars, workshops, and self-study.

Technical assistance activities allow Center faculty to serve as a resource in which they provide individualized assistance to the target audience on how to implement and utilize the new knowledge and information in a variety of settings. In addition to training and education activities discussed above, methods include on-site consultation, teleconsultation, computer-assisted consultation, and mail technical assistance.

Nine training priorities/projects have been established to facilitate the delivery of training, educational, and technical assistance activities. They are:

T1 Service Delivery Collaboration

T2 Career Awareness and Exploration for Students With Disabilities

T3 Community-based Employment Strategies

T4 Empowerment Skills and Services

T5 Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process

T6 Current Issues in Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment of People with Disabilities

T7 Rehabilitation Graduate Training

T8 Rehabilitation Research Training

T9 Public Education Programs to Enhance Employment Preparation and Employment Outcomes

PROJECT STATUS

The reader is referred to pages 163-182 in the grant application for a complete description of the Training, Education and Technical Assistance program. The following progress reports describe the accomplishments and activities for this reporting period.

Training /Technical Assistance Progress Reports

I. Priority T1

A. Title: Service Delivery Collaboration

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 174

II. Faculty

Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.

III. Description

This priority area is designed to parallel research Priority Area I of the same focus. Training and technical assistance activities are directed at preparing individuals from vocational rehabilitation agencies, community rehabilitation programs, independent living programs, schools, business and industry, and other community programs to utilize collaborative efforts to promote employment readiness, vocational skill development, and positive work habits that will result in employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Programs and activities are designed to meet the needs of specific groups of participants and will vary depending on the audience. Examples of topic areas include (a) models of collaboration involving multiple service delivery systems, consumers, and other community entities; (b) strategies and techniques for establishing community-based collaborative programs; and (c) research findings relative to promoting collaborative efforts.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 24 instructional hours were provided for 29 trainees in 3 programs as follows:

Johnson, V.A. (12/16/96) Case Management Support Overview: A Clerical Staff-Rehabilitation Counselor Team Approach to Service Delivery.
6 instructional hours. 7 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (2/6-7/97) Rehabilitation, Industry, and Business: Strategies for Collaboration in the 1990s. 12 instructional hours. 15 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (3/21/97) Case Management Support I: A Clerical Staff-Rehabilitation Counselor Team Approach to Intake Activities.
6 instructional hours. 7 trainees. Hot Springs and Russellville, AR.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from independent living programs, state rehabilitation agencies, community rehabilitation programs and municipal organizations.

Priority T2

A. Title: Career Awareness and Exploration for Students with Disabilities

B. Grant Application Reference: Pages 174 -175

II. Faculty

Roy Farley, Ed.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.
Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Description

This priority area parallels research Priority Area II of the same focus and is designed to facilitate the utilization of research findings and products from projects in that area as well as information and products from the Center's previous work in related areas. Activities are directed at preparing individuals from vocational rehabilitation agencies, special education, secondary education, vocational education, transition programs, and youth manpower programs to utilize a variety of techniques and strategies to promote career awareness, exploration, and preparation for young persons with disabilities. Program and topic areas vary depending on the needs of the audience but examples include (a) developing career awareness, exploration, and preparation objectives and goals in educational planning, (b) techniques, strategies, and intervention programs that facilitate career awareness and preparation, and (c) understanding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendments.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 41 instructional hours were provided for 112 trainees in 6 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (9/12/96) On-the-job Strategies for Addressing Vocational Problem Behaviors. 3 instructional hours. 52 trainees. Galveston, TX.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (11/21-22/96) Career Assessment & Planning Strategies for Students with Disabilities. 12 instructional hours. 8 trainees. Plumerville, AR.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (12/2/96) Career Awareness and Exploration for Students with Disabilities. 12 instructional hours. 6 trainees. Plumerville, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (3/4/97) Career Development for Students with Disabilities. 6 instructional hours. 11 trainees. Plumerville, AR.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (4/22/97) Career Development for Students with Disabilities. 6 instructional hours. 5 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Means, B.L., Farley, R.C., & Johnson, V.A. (8/8/96) Career Development Strategies for Students with Disabilities. 2 instructional hours. 30 Trainees. Little Rock, AR

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from vocational rehabilitation agencies, transition programs, secondary, vocational and special education school programs, and community manpower programs.

I. Priority T3

A. Title: Community-based Employment Strategies

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 175

II. Faculty

Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.

III. Description

Paralleling the research priority area of the same emphasis, activities in this area focus on facilitating utilization of research findings and products developed as a result of activities in Priority Area III as well as earlier efforts by the Center. Activities are directed at preparing individuals from vocational rehabilitation, schools, transition programs, independent living programs, community rehabilitation programs, and other manpower programs to utilize practices that enhance employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Special attention is focused on employment planning and advancement strategies for those with the most severe disabilities. Specific training programs and topics vary depending on the needs of specific audiences, but examples include: (a) peer support programs, (b) employability/career enhancement clinics, (c) career clubs, and (d) employment and preparation strategies.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 13.5 instructional hours were provided for 33 trainees in 2 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Johnson, V.A., and Akridge, R.L. (5/16/96) Career Intervention Strategies for Community Rehabilitation Programs. 12 instructional hours. 31 trainees. Baton Rouge, LA.

Schriner, K., & Reed, C. (5/31/96) Issues and options in promoting quality community-based employment programs. 1.5 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Bentonville, AR.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from community rehabilitation programs, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, schools, and independent living programs.

PROJECT STATUS

I. Priority T4

A. Title: Empowerment Skills and Services

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 176

II. Faculty

Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.
Brian Bolton, Ph.D.

III. Description

This priority area is designed to facilitate the utilization of research findings and products developed from activities in Research Priority Area IV as well as research and training products from the Center's previous work in this area. Activities focus on preparing individuals from vocational rehabilitation agencies, schools, community rehabilitation programs, independent living programs, transition programs, and consumer organizations to utilize techniques and strategies and provide services designed to empower consumers and emphasize consumer choice and self-advocacy in planning for, gaining access to, and participating in employment preparation programs. Training content is designed to meet the needs of specific groups. Examples include (a) strategies for measuring empowerment, (b) enhancing self-direction and choice in vocational planning and career decision-making, (c) empowering minority populations, and (d) promoting empowerment and involvement during the vocational rehabilitation process.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 4 instructional hours were provided for 39 trainees in 2 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Bolton, B. (9/19/96) Empowerment in Rehabilitation. 1 instructional hour 24 trainees. Norman, OK

Johnson, V.A. (4/17/97) Job Clubs and Keep-It Clubs: Consumer-Directed Approaches to Job Seeking and Job Retention. 3 instructional hours. 15 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from independent living programs, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, consumer organizations, community rehabilitation programs, and schools.

I. Priority T5

A. Title: Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 176

II. Faculty

Brian Bolton, Ph.D.
Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.

III. Description

Designed to disseminate research findings and products from Research Priority Area V, activities in T5 are directed at preparing vocational rehabilitation audiences to utilize techniques, strategies, and interventions to improve eligibility determination, vocational assessment, job preparation, and job placement. Programs and topics vary depending on the specific needs of training audiences. Examples include (a) streamlining the eligibility determination process and facilitating order of selection, (b) improved vocational assessment strategies, (c) job counseling and placement, (d) job preparation strategies, (e) job placement skills, and (f) resource utilization.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 72.5 instructional hours were provided for 224 trainees in 11 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Bolton, B. (10/8-9/96) Personality assessment in vocational rehabilitation. 6 instructional hours. 11 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Bolton, B. (4/30-5/1/97) Vocationally-oriented personality assessment in vocational rehabilitation. 6.5 instructional hours. 45 trainees. Baton Rouge, LA.

Johnson, V.A. (7/8-10/96) Marketing Rehabilitation to Enhance Employer Development and Employment Outcomes. 12 instructional hours. 14 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (9/13/96) Creating and Utilizing Employer-sponsored Integration Teams to Promote Employment of People with Disabilities. 3 instructional hours. 52 trainees. Galveston, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (12/16/96) Strategies for Improving the Vocational Rehabilitation Process. 6 instructional hours. 7 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (2/24-25/97) Assessment and Instruction in Critical Work Behaviors: Program Development and Evaluation. 15 instructional hours. 15 trainees. Merrillville, IN

Johnson, V.A. (3/27/97) Targeting and Training Critical Work Behaviors. 6 instructional hours. 16 trainees. San Antonio, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (3/28/97) Success Versus Survival: Negotiating the American Labor Market. 3 instructional hours. 16 trainees. San Antonio, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (3/28/97) Tailoring Your Own Labor Market Survey: Internet Sources of Information on Jobs, Careers, and Employment Trends. 3 instructional hours. 16 trainees. San Antonio, TX

Johnson, V.A. (5/5/97) Rehabilitation Marketing. 6 instructional hours. 16 trainees. San Antonio, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (5/6/97) Preparing Consumers for Long-term Employability. 6 instructional hours. 16 trainees. San Antonio, TX.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from state vocational rehabilitation agencies, business and industry, and other manpower development programs.

I. Priority T6

A. Title: Current Issues in Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment of People With Disabilities

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 177

II. Faculty

Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.
Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Description

Activities focusing on selected issues in vocational rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities are conducted each year. These activities are conducted in collaboration with others and focus on employment of individuals with disabilities. Topics selected are based on input from several entities that may include representatives from the Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA), the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and others.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 30 instructional hours were provided for 362 trainees in 6 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (9/12/96) Addressing Severe Social and Vocational Deficits in Supported Employment Settings: Problems, Solutions, and Success Strategies. 3 instructional hours. 52 trainees. Galveston, TX.

Johnson, V.A., & Parkerson, S. (9/14/96) Targeting and Training Critical Work Behaviors On-the-job. 3 instructional hours. 52 trainees. Galveston, TX.

Johnson, V.A. (10/14/96) Success Versus Survival: Negotiating the American Labor Market. 3 instructional hours. 36 trainees. Key West, FL.

Johnson, V.A. (10/14/96) Tailoring Your Own Labor Market Survey: Internet Sources of Information on Jobs, Careers, and Employment Trends. 3 instructional hours. 36 trainees. Key West, FL.

Johnson, V.A. (10/15/96) Preparing Consumers for Long-term Employability. 6 instructional hours. 36 trainees. Key West, FL.

Schriner, K., et al. [Conference Coordinators] (10/31-11/1/96) Building a Bridge to Employment. 12 instructional hours. 150 trainees. Bismarck, AR.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from state vocational rehabilitation agencies, community rehabilitation programs, independent living centers, manpower development programs, and business and industry.

I. Priority T7*

A. Title: Rehabilitation Graduate Training

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 177

II. Faculty

Richard Roessler, Ph.D.
Kay Schriner, Ph.D.
Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.
Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.

III. Description

This priority focuses on providing graduate training at the masters and doctoral levels to individuals who are preparing for careers in rehabilitation. Center faculty conduct classes and seminars in the Department of Rehabilitation Education and Research as well as lectures in other departments such as special education and vocational education. Graduate training provides another avenue to disseminate research findings from the six research priority areas.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 285 instructional hours were provided for 123 trainees in 12 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Bolton, B. (4/24/97) Adjustment to severe disabilities in REHAB 5433 Psychological Aspects of Disability. 2 instructional hours. 8 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Farley, R.C. (Fall 1996) T7: Rehab 5443 Rehabilitation Case Management. 45 instructional hours. 9 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (10/21/96) Medical and Psychological Aspects of Case Management in REHAB 5443 Rehabilitation Case Management. 3 instructional hours. 9 Trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (11/25/96) Marketing Approaches to Job Placement in REHAB 5443 Rehabilitation Case Management. 3 instructional hours. 9 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (Fall 1997) RHAB 6433 Vocational Evaluation, Adjustment and Placement. 45 instructional hours. 11 trainees. Little Rock, AR.

Neath, J. (Spring 1996) REHAB 5993 Multicultural & Gender Issues in Rehabilitation. 45 instructional hours. 11 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Neath, J. (9/11/96) Lecture in REHAB 5463 Independent Living. 2.5 instructional hours. 9 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Neath, J. (11/11/96) Supported Employment in REHAB 5423 Introduction to Rehabilitation. 1 instructional hour. 12 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Summer 1996) REHAB 6053 Vocational Evaluation and Adjustment. 45 instructional hours. 12 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) REHAB 5423 Vocational Rehabilitation. 45 instructional hours. 11 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Spring 1997) REHAB 5493 Rehabilitation Case Management 45 instructional hours. 10 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Schriner, K. (6/6/96) Rehabilitation Counseling: Alternative Views of the Profession and its Relationship to the Problems Faced by People with Disabilities in RHAB 5993, Multicultural and Gender Issues in Rehabilitation. 3.5 instructional hours. 12 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

In addition to the above lectures, seminars, classes, and individual instruction, faculty provided advisement, tutoring, and mentoring to a number of students preparing for careers in rehabilitation.

*Project T7 represents a collaborative effort between the RTC and the Rehabilitation Graduate Education Program. R. Roessler has a joint appointment of 75% Graduate Education and 25% RTC. His T7 accomplishments include both RTC and Graduate Education assignments.

I. Priority T8*

A. Title: Rehabilitation Research Training

B. Grant Application Reference: Page 171 & 177

II. Faculty

Brian Bolton, Ph.D.
Rick Roessler, Ph.D.
Kay Schriner, Ph.D.
Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Jeanne Neath, Ph.D.

III. Description

The Center conducts programs of training in rehabilitation research including training in research methodology and applied research experience. The goal of this training priority is to increase the number of qualified researchers working in the area of disability and rehabilitation research. Multiple strategies are used to achieve this goal. Activities reflected below include both pre and in service training activities such as lectures, classes, seminars, internships, and workshops. Other strategies include applied research experience through the use of Center affiliates, scholars-in-residence, and postdoctoral experiences.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 370.25 instructional hours were provided for 104 trainees in 23 programs/sessions. Below is a list of those activities.

Bolton, B. (10/10/96) Measurement in Rehabilitation in REHAB 5483, Rehabilitation Research. 2.5 instructional hours. 9 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Farley, R.C. (12/19/96) Using the Internet for Research, Dissemination, and Technical Assistance: An Introduction and Demonstration of the Basics. 2 instructional hours. 5 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (Summer 1996) Dissertation. 3 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Little Rock, AR.

Johnson, V.A. (Spring 1997) Dissertation. 3 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Little Rock, AR.

Murphy, R., Farley, R.C., and Johnson, V. (3/6/97) Enhancing Faculty Capacity in Disability and Rehabilitation Research at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. 8 instructional hours. 22 trainees. Pine Bluff, AR.

Neath, J. (Summer 1996) Independent Study in Research. 15 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Fayetteville, AR.

Neath, J. (Spring 1997) REHAB 6991 Research Seminar. 15 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Fayetteville, AR.

Neath, J. (Spring 1997) REHAB 5483 Advanced Rehabilitation Research [Team taught] 45 instructional hours. 5 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Parkerson, S. (2/6/97) Follow-up Procedures for PWI Placement Specialist. 2 instructional hours. 15 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Parkerson, S. (2/12/97) Exit Interview Procedure for Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center Students. 1 instructional hour. 5 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

Roessler, R. (Summer 1996) RHAB 700V Dissertation. 9 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Summer 1996) RHAB 6775 Internship. 30 instructional hours. 3 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) RHAB 5749 Internship. 12 instructional hours. 4 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) RHAB 6213 Advanced Psychological Aspects. 45 instructional hours. 6 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) RHAB 5993: Employer Relations. 45 instructional hours. 3 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) RHAB 6992 Research Seminar. 15 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Fall 1996) RHAB 700V Dissertation. 5 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Spring 1997) RHAB 699 Research Seminar. 15 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Spring 1997) RHAB 5749 Internship. 6 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Spring 1997) RHAB 5993 Employer Relations. 45 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Roessler, R. (Spring 1997) RHAB 7020 Dissertation. 30 instructional hours. 2 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Schriner, K. (6/27/96) Finding Funding for Disability-related Research and Development Activities in HKRD Grant-Writing. 1.75 instructional hours. 10 trainees. Fayetteville, AR.

Schriner, K. (Spring 1997) Independent Study in Research . 15 instructional hours. 1 trainee. Fayetteville, AR.

*The graduate instruction provided in project T8 represents a collaborative effort with the University of Arkansas Rehabilitation Ph.D. program. R. Roessler's accomplishments include a 75% assignment to the Rehabilitation Graduate Program and a 25% assignment to the RTC.

PROJECT STATUS

I. Priority T9

A. Title: Public Education Programs to Enhance Employment Preparation and Employment Outcomes

B. Grant Application Reference: Pages 178 - 179

II. Faculty

Bob L. Means, Ph.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Description

Activities within this priority area are directed at consumers with disabilities, their parents and other family members, guardians, advocates, significant others, and authorized representatives as well as community leaders and policy makers. Programs and activities are designed to meet the needs of specific groups and therefore will vary but will be designed to enhance empowerment, self-direction and advocacy as it relates to employability development and employment outcomes.

IV. Activities, Accomplishments, and Outcomes

During this reporting period 3.5 instructional hours were provided for 12 trainees in 1 program/session. Below is a list of those activities.

Means, B.L. (6/5/96) Weight Management Strategies for Life and Career. 3.5 instructional hours. 12 trainees. Hot Springs, AR.

In addition to the above training activities, technical assistance was provided to individuals from state vocational rehabilitation agencies, community rehabilitation programs, hospitals, schools, and city and municipal government organizations.

Service and Outreach

The Center's Service and Outreach program is designed to strengthen ties and expand cooperative and collaborative activities with its constituency groups. These cooperative and collaborative relationships represent a major strength of the Center and contribute to achieving objectives two and three.

A brief description of examples of these relationships with local, state, regional, and national groups is provided.

Consumer and Advocacy Groups

The Center maintains communication and relationships with consumer groups and advocacy organizations in an ongoing effort to stay abreast of consumer perspectives as it might influence the Center's research, training, dissemination and technical assistance activities.

During this reporting period, the Center worked directly with a national, regional, state, and local disability organizations to ensure that Center efforts are consumer-directed. Examples of these organizations include the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Association of Higher Education and Disability, the Epilepsy Foundation of America, the Garland County Mental Health Association, the Arkansas chapter of the Lupus Foundation of America, and Family Support Services.

National Advisory Council

The Center maintains a National Advisory Council made up of people with disabilities, their families, service providers, policy makers, and scholars. People with disabilities and their families represent 67% of the Council membership. This group is involved in the Center's efforts throughout the research planning, implementation, dissemination, review, and evaluation phases of operation.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

The Center's cooperative, collaborative, and organizational affiliation with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) provides a direct linkage between the Center and the administration of the state Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. This relationship facilitates the cooperative planning and conduct of relevant research and training activities and enhances their applicability and implementation. The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services is crucial to the applied research and training activities conducted by the Center. As a result of these project activities, and the interrelationships fostered by the activities, faculty are in a position to provide timely technical assistance and/or serve as consultants to service providers. These cooperative relations with the state agency also permit faculty to remain

informed and abreast of current trends, issues and/or developments related to the provision of rehabilitation services. This interaction has provided direction for a number of applied research projects conducted by the Center. In addition to the NIDRR base grant activities the Center is engaged in several other projects with ARS that are designed to improve employment services for people with disabilities.

Other Rehabilitation Service Delivery Organizations and Agencies

The RTC maintains relationships and continues its outreach and collaborative efforts with a number of service delivery organizations to include a national audience of state rehabilitation agencies, community rehabilitation programs, the Department of the Navy, hospitals, and independent living programs.

Educational Institutions

Service to persons with disabilities during their preparatory education has become a focus of Center activities recently and the Center has formed cooperative and collaborative relationships with a number of educational entities. Prime among these are; National Transition Network, special education departments (a joint project is being conducted with the Arkansas Department of Education), secondary schools, co-ops, and vocational technical schools.

Professional and Service Organizations

The RTC faculty participate in a wide variety of professional organizations. These include the Society for Disability Studies, the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers, the Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation, the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association, the National Rehabilitation Association, and the Association of Higher Education and Disability. Faculty involvement ranges from making presentations at annual meetings to serving as officers. These organizational affiliations afford opportunities for faculty to keep current with developments in the field, and to influence the development of new policies and practices designed to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

The faculty also serve the academic and professional community through service to journals, including Rehabilitation Psychology, the Journal of Disability Policy Studies, Rehabilitation Education, and Computers in Human Behavior.

Other NIDRR Grantees

The Center makes an extensive effort to coordinate with other NIDRR grantees to insure a coordinated and cost effective Institute effort. Collaborative activities range from joint planning to dissemination. Examples of collaborative efforts the Center maintains with other grantees are: serving on advisory committees; exchanging information to facilitate

widespread dissemination of products with such entities as National Center on the Dissemination of Disability Research, National Rehabilitation Information Center, Clearinghouse, etc.; jointly sponsoring and conducting conferences and workshops; Conducting joint presentations and exhibits at National and Regional conferences and meetings; and assisting with data collection and other research activities.

Other Government Agencies

The RTC cooperates and collaborates with other governmental agencies to extend its effectiveness in serving as a National Resource. Relationships have been established and activities carried out with parties from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Veterans Administration, Department of Labor, State Department of Education, and others.

Minority Groups

The RTC continues its collaborative activities with UAPB, a historically black college, which is described in Supplemental Project SPIII. Plans are being developed to collaborate with individuals from minority backgrounds in presenting research findings at the National Conference of the Association for Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns. The RTC will also have an exhibit at the conference as part of its outreach to culturally diverse groups.

University of Arkansas Interdepartmental and Intradepartmental Efforts

The University of Arkansas system provides extensive resources for the Center. The Center is a program in the Department of Rehabilitation Education and Research in the College of Education. The Department of Rehabilitation Education and Research was established in 1976. In addition to our Center the Department includes the Research and Training Center for Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, the Rehabilitation Graduate Education Program, the Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, and the Communication Disorders Program.

The education program offers graduate degrees (masters and doctoral) in rehabilitation, with specialties in vocational rehabilitation, independent living, deafness and hearing impairment. The Communication Disorders Program offers undergraduate and graduate degrees. Center faculty have the opportunity to present research findings to graduate students, influence the curriculum, and test products developed for university and continuing education. Faculty also take an active role in preparing doctoral level researchers to conduct relevant research in rehabilitation and disability. Collaboration with the Rehabilitation Graduate Education Program allows the RTC to carry out training project T7 and contributes greatly to project T8.

PROJECT STATUS

The Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP) located at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, was established in 1974. Its mission is to provide a broad range of continuing education courses to personnel of VR agencies, rehabilitation facilities, independent living programs, client assistance projects, and Projects with Industry. The ARTCVR's affiliation with RRCEP facilitates the dissemination of Center products and the two organizations frequently collaborate on the delivery of training programs in RSA Region VI.

The RTC for Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (RT-31) began operations in October 1981. The close working relationship between the two RTCs enhances the activities of both programs. RT-31 is currently conducting research in the same general areas as those of the ARTCVR.

As a program in the College of Education, the Center also has interdisciplinary opportunities with programs in special education, vocational education, counseling education, sociology, psychology, and law.

Supplemental Projects

In addition to the research and training programs and projects proposed in the Center's grant application, the Center conducted three supplemental projects focusing on the following priority areas:

Supplemental Priority Area I. This effort organizes and directs an annual study on a rehabilitation topic, publishes the results, and distributes the manual to state vocational rehabilitation agencies.

Supplemental Priority Area II. This research initiative with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) develops and conducts collaborative ventures with faculty from HBCUs designed to enhance the research capacity and increase the participation of faculty from minority backgrounds in disability and rehabilitation research.

Supplemental Priority Area III. This is a knowledge dissemination initiative focusing on the priority area of disability policy.

Three projects have been developed that address these three priorities. They are:

SPI: National Institute on Rehabilitation Issues

SPII: Enhancing the Research Capacity and Increasing the Participation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Disability and Rehabilitation Research

SPIII: Journal of Disability Policy Studies

This section provides information on these projects with current year accomplishments.

PROJECT STATUS

Supplemental Project SPI

A. Title: National Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI)

B. Project Dates: August, 1993 - August, 1996

C. Project Status: Completed

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D.

B. Other Project Staff: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D.
Sandra Parkerson, B.S.

III. Project Description

The IRI as an educational effort has been in continuous operation from 1947, some 50 years. The Institute was designed to develop training and resource materials for use by state rehabilitation agencies and related organizations on topics of major concern as identified by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR). Three studies were conducted collaboratively on an annual basis by the University of Arkansas Research and Training Center and the University of Wisconsin-Stout Research and Training Center (UWSRTC). In even years, ARTCVR conducted two studies while UWSRTC sponsored one study and the annual meeting. In odd years, UWSRTC had two study groups and ARTCVR assumed responsibility for one group and the annual meeting of the National Institute. Documents were developed by study groups composed of knowledgeable rehabilitation professionals. Upon completion, these documents were distributed to rehabilitation agencies and organizations across the country. The RTC's participation in the IRI concluded in August, 1996 with the completion of the 22nd IRI cycle.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. Distributed 21st IRI documents to state agencies, rehabilitation educators, research and training centers, RCEPs and others across the country. Those documents are:

a. American Indian Rehabilitation Programs: Unmet Needs

b. Strategies to Enhance Job Retention and Career Advancement in Rehabilitation.

2. Prepared draft copy of Use of Technology to Aid Clients in Employment for 22nd IRI.

3. Convened Editorial Committee to edit the 22nd IRI study.

4. Presented the Native American document to 48 participants at the July annual conference of the Association of Higher Education and Disability, New Orleans, LA.

5. Submitted final copy of Technology document for review by RSA appointed committee representing CSAVR and NIDRR.

6. Submitted conference proposals to two national and one regional conference program committees on the Native American document.

7. Processed IRI Self-Study Program examinations.

8. Disseminated IRI self-study program promotional materials.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes.

RSA administrative and funding changes resulted in discontinuation of 23rd IRI activities (May 96).

PROJECT STATUS

I. Supplemental Project SPII

A. Title: Enhancing the Research Capacity and Increasing the Participation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Disability and Rehabilitation Research

B. Project Dates: August 5, 1993 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D., RTC
Hazel Linton, Ph.D., UAPB

B. Co-investigator: Roy C. Farley, Ed.D., RTC
Glenda Kennedy, Ed.D., UAPB
Johnny Thomas, Ed.D., UAPB
Philip Aka, Ph.D., UAPB
Irene Henderson, Ph.D., UAPB

III. Project Description

This project is designed to enhance the research capacity and increase the participation of historically Black colleges and universities in disability and rehabilitation research. Specific objectives are to (a) increase the research skills of individuals from minority backgrounds in conducting disability and rehabilitation research, (b) increase the participation of faculty from historically Black colleges and universities in conducting disability and rehabilitation research, and (c) increase the participation of historically Black colleges and universities in competitions for grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements under Title II of the Rehabilitation Act.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

1. The RTC and UAPB teams collaborated in the planning and presentation of a national training seminar for individuals from historically black colleges and universities.

2. A nationally recognized individual in research and minority concerns was acquired to conduct a majority of the training. RTC, UAPB, and State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency personnel assisted.

3. RTC and UAPB faculty developed marketing strategies and promoted the seminar.

4. RTC and UAPB faculty contributed to materials development for the seminar.

5. Seminar was conducted March 6, 1997 with 22 individuals in attendance.

6. Another research team from UAPB consisting of Dr. Philip Aka and Dr. Irene Henderson was formed to initiate new research study on empowering individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds.

7. Training and technical assistance was provided to the new team by RTC and UAPB faculty.

8. Ideas for grant proposals and potential funding sources were provided to UAPB teams.

B. Unanticipated Problems and Project Changes

None

PROJECT STATUS

I. Supplemental Project SPIII

A. Title: Journal of Disability Policy Studies

B. Dates: August 5, 1994 - August 4, 1998

C. Project Status: Continuing

II. Faculty

A. Principal Investigator: Kay Schriner, Ph.D.

III. Project Description

The objective of this project is to provide a vehicle for disseminating new knowledge related to disability policy. The publication of the Journal of Disability Policy Studies provides an avenue to disseminate the research of leading scholars in the disability policy. Disseminating timely and relevant information about promising policy approaches has a significant impact by describing and evaluating public policy affecting the lives of people with disabilities.

IV. Progress Report

A. Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes:

During this reporting period, the following were published:

Volume 7, No. 1, June 1996

Contents:

Articles

Medicaid Spending Reductions and Developmental Disabilities- David Braddock and Richard Hemp

Asian Pacific Americans: The Need for Ethnicity-Specific Disability and Rehabilitation Data - Haiou Yand, Paul Leung, Jerry Wang, & Neil Shim

Rethinking Implementation of the Least Restrictive Environment Policy of the IDEA: Educational Leaders in the Forefront - Annette Liggett, A.P. Johnson, & Susan Brody Hasazi

Policy Forum

Looking Under the Street Lamp: Inappropriate Uses of Measures Just Because They Are There - Corinne Kirchner

Policy Responses to Substance Abuse and Disability: A Concept Paper - Dennis Moore and Jo Ann Ford

Volume 7, No.2, December 1996

Contents:

Articles

Disability Culture or Disability Consciousness? - Sharon Barnartt

Investigation and Enforcement of a Disability Discrimination Statute: Complaints of Employment Discrimination Filed in New York State - Nancy Mudrick & Adrienne Asch

The Inclusion Controversy: Emerging Patterns in Case Law- Nikki Murdick & Barbara Gartin

Policy Forum

Achieving Independence: The Challenge for the 21st Century - National Council on Disability

Balancing Security and Opportunity: The Challenge of Disability Income Policy - National Academy of Social Insurance

B. Unanticipated Problems and Program Changes

NIDRR provided funding for the publication of JDPS until August 1996. The ARTCVR continued to publish the journal as part of its dissemination effort during the past year. Continuation during the final year of the grant cycle will depend upon securing another funding source.

Customer/Constituent Feedback

The Center uses several strategies to assure quality control in all of its activities and to achieve accountability to its target audience. As a part of a customer-oriented approach, ongoing feedback is sought about Center activities and products. One method used is to survey customers. Consumers are surveyed in terms of their use of information generated by the research programs, how helpful it is, how satisfied they are with it, and its impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

During this reporting period information and products were disseminated to the target audience in a variety of ways. Two major strategies involved (1) training programs designed to disseminate information and promote its utilization in real world settings and (2) direct mail dissemination utilizing the Materials Development and Dissemination Center. The following is a summary of feedback obtained from samples of participants in training programs and recipients of products developed by the Research and Training Center.

Usefulness

Product Recipients - Seventy-six percent of the sample receiving products and materials from the Research and Training Center report they use the information in the delivery of services or in their daily living. Forty-one percent also share the products with others thus extending their use.

Training Participants - One hundred percent of participants in training programs report they will use information from the training with 75% report they will use it in their work or daily living. Sixty percent report they will share information with others.

Helpfulness

Product Recipients - Ninety-nine percent of the sample receiving products report they find the information helpful. Eighty percent report the products increase their knowledge and skills in the employment area

Training Participants - One hundred percent of participants in training programs report they find the training helpful. Seventy-one percent report it increased their knowledge and skill and access to and use of new information. Eighty-seven percent report that the training will improve the service delivery system and help them to more effectively and efficiently provide employment services.

Satisfaction

Using a scale from 1 = very dissatisfied to 10 = very satisfied, recipients of products and material reported an average rating of 8.4. Participants of training programs reported an average satisfaction rating of 8.9.

Impact on the lives of people with disabilities

Product Recipients - Ninety-four percent of the sample receiving products and materials report that use of the products will benefit consumers in the employment area. 78% report consumers will benefit from access to a more improved service delivery system that has more knowledgeable and skilled service providers

Training Participants - Eighty percent of participants receiving training report consumers will benefit in employment from their attendance at the program and use of the information obtained. One hundred percent report consumers will benefit from an improved service delivery system.

Supplemental Information/Changes

This section summarizes changes that have occurred in the Center that were not part of the initial application. For the most part, activities continue to be carried out as proposed in the research, training, dissemination, and technical assistance programs.

A few changes were made in proposed research projects during this reporting period. Most were minor and none limited the Center in achieving its goals and objectives. Project RIC was subsumed under Project RIB. Minor changes, primarily dealing with timelines and data collection, were made in projects RIB, RIIIB, RIVB and RIVC. These changes are detailed in the research project progress reports found on pages 15-58. Principal Investigators were changed for projects RIIIB, RIVB and RIVC with the retirement of Dr. Akridge.

During this reporting period the Center was receiving supplemental funding to conduct three additional projects that were not proposed in the grant application. Funding for two of these projects ended during the period. Details are provided in the section on Supplemental Projects on pages 92-97. These projects allowed the Center to extend its activities related to all three of its objectives.

The Institute of Rehabilitation Issues allowed the Center to generate new knowledge on current issues identified by rehabilitation practitioners, disseminate the information to a wide audience, and facilitate its utilization in service settings. The project ended August 4, 1996.

The research initiative with historically Black colleges and universities allowed the Center to increase its activities in preparing individuals from minority backgrounds to more effectively participate in disability and rehabilitation research. This project continues.

The Journal of Disability Policy Studies project extends the Center's dissemination of new knowledge in the important area of policy related disability issues. Funding ended August 4, 1996 but the project continues with additional funding being sought.

During this reporting period a few changes were made in personnel, none of them interfering with the ability of the Center in meeting its objectives. Dr. Robert Akridge retired in July 1996 and Dr. Virginia Johnson increased her time to the project assuming many of his assignments. Other faculty and staff made minor adjustments in time allotments to assume Dr. Akridge's responsibilities.

Faculty & Staff

Faculty and Staff

Faculty

Roy C. Farley, Ed.D., Professor and Director
Kay Schriner, Ph.D., Research Professor and Coordinator of Research
Bob L. Means, Ph.D., Professor and Coordinator of Training, Dissemination, and Technical Assistance
Robert L. Akridge, Ed.D., Professor (retired 7/1/96)
Brian Bolton, Ph.D., University Professor
Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D., Research Assistant Professor
Jeanne Neath, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor
Richard Roessler, Ph.D., University Professor

Staff

Chyrel Banks, Accounting Supervisor
Mary Drevdahl, Program Specialist
Patty George, Data Entry Operator
Lou Tabor, Administrative Assistant
Anita Owen, Secretary
Sandra Parkerson, Program Specialist
Pam Vaught, Dissemination Clerk
Sharon Dumas, Secretary

UAPB-Affiliated Staff

Hazel Linton, Ph.D.
Glenda Kennedy, Ed.D.
Johnny Thomas, Ed.D.
Philip Aka, Ph.D.
Irene Henderson, Ph.D.

Center faculty have from 15 to 30 years experience in the area of vocational rehabilitation and employment. Seventy-five percent have disabilities, are family members of a person with a disability, or are from traditionally underrepresented groups. They have devoted the major portion of their professional careers to conducting applied rehabilitation research, translating research findings into strategies that facilitate practical application, disseminating findings to a wide audience, and providing technical assistance to facilitate utilization. All are nationally recognized experts in the field of rehabilitation.

National Advisory Council

Dr. Brantley Cagle, Chair
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Mr. Joe Loerance Deaver
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Mr. Bobby Simpson
Mr. Terry Brigance

The Center Advisory Council is made up of representatives of the Center constituency groups and target audience. Members represent individuals with disabilities, service providers, and scholars and educators. Eighty percent have disabilities and/or are members of minority populations. They provide guidance to the RTC on all phases of the research process including planning, implementation, dissemination, monitoring, and evaluation.

During this reporting period three members left the Council due to retirement and health reasons.